

THE
LIFE
Of the *HOLY MOTHER*
S. TERESA;

Foundress of the Reformation of the
Discalced Carmelites, according to
the Primitive Rule.

Divided into Two Parts.

The Second containing
HER FOUNDATIONS

*Act. 2. 17. Effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem Carnem : — Juvenes
vestri Visiones videbunt, & Seniores vestri somnia somniabunt.*

*Jo. 14. 23. Si Quis diligit me, Sermonem meum servabit ; & Pater
meus diligit eum ; & ad eum veniemus ; & mansionem apud eum fo-
ciemus. ver. 21. Et ego diligam eum, & manifestabo ei meipsum*

*1 Co. 2. 14. Animalis Homo non percipit ea, qua sunt Spiritus I
Stultitia enim est Illis.*

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THE LITERATURE OF AMERICA

BY
JOHN RICHARD GREEN
WITH A HISTORY OF
AMERICAN LITERATURE

IN
TWO
VOL.

THE
SECOND
VOLUME
CONTAINS
A HISTORY OF
AMERICAN LITERATURE
FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT DAY
AND
INCLUDES
A HISTORY OF
AMERICAN LITERATURE
FOR CHILDREN

BY JOHN RICHARD GREEN

The PREFACE.

THAT God, in all Ages, hath used an extraordinary familiarity with, & done special favours to, some Persons of more singular Sanctity, Retiredness, and Mortification, appears by the evidences of the *Church-History* of all Times; wherein Persons, sufficiently creditable, and perfectly informed, have carefully Registered, and consigned them to Posterity; partly to celebrate, and set forth God's exceeding great kindness and bounty to those, who serve him more intirely; and to shew the abundant Grace purchased by the Merits of our Lord Incarnate for all, who are willing to make themselves capable thereof; and partly, to encourage many others to the imitation of such Sanctity, by seeing the greatness of those Spiritual Joys and Consolations, which, even in this life, accompanied it. Now very eminent in this kind are these Works of the *Holy Mother Teresa*.

For a Preparative to the reading of which, since this Great Saint seems designed by the Divine Providence, in the tepidity of these latter times, for an improvement of the Christian World in *Prayer*, and in the great perfections acquirable thereby, it seems necessary, before the pious Reader enter upon her Works, to give him some brief account of the *strange Ways*, by which God conducted her in order to this end; and, the great Use She afterward made of it; and *Instructions* She was enabled to give, in the conduct of others. Intending here to present him only with a rude and compendious draught thereof, rather to provoke his longing to look into these excellent Writings, than to give him any full intelligence of their *Contents*.

Here, then, we find a Yong Virgin, after her being first inflamed with the frequent Lection of Books of Devotion, and especially such as treated of *Mental Prayer*, of the several *Ascents* therein, and admirable Effects thereof, with great courage, resolving to spend many hours of the Day in it, and try its rewards: Meditating, as she saith,

of our Lord, and on her own *Vilemſy*, and *Sins*; and on the sudden *End*, and Vanishing of all Present things (Persons or Possessions); and *Eternity of the Future*, which thoughts drew her from the love of the perishing World; and excited her exceedingly to that of our Lord; who, such a Person as *He*, had done, and suffered such things for the saving of such a Person, as *She*.

Next; in this her practice of *Prayer*, whilst in her beginnings, She combated with much Distraction of Thoughts linked as yet to some Secular Vanities, many Aridities, and Desolations of Spirit, and other impediments, yet we find her rigidly exacting of her self the foreſet portion of time for it, without diversion, or rising from Gods Presence; and in such distraction or dulness, if much, ordinarily procuring the fixing of her *Thoughts*, and the exciting of her *Affections*, by the reading of some Book of *Devotion*; She always having one, for this end, lying by her.

This her *Perſeverance* in *Prayer*, through whatever accidents thereof, joyned with *Purity* of *Conversation*, and an endeavour, out of love and gratitude to so good a Lord, no more to offend him, by putting her self in the occasions of committing either *Mortal*, or also any, voluntary and predeliberated, *Venial Sin*, we find rewarded, by certain degrees, with many rich and supernatural favours received in *Prayer*, even such as her books had formerly told her of; and some of these enjoyed not long after her beginning this holy Exercise, and even before the *Twentieth* year of her age: As, a certain extraordinary *Tenderness* of the *Heart*, and melting into most sweet and joyful *Tears*, somtimes without ability to stop them; a particular ſenſe of the *Divine Presence*, as by, or within her; an *Internal Recollection* of the *Soul*, as it were, shutting the *door* of the *Exterior Senses*, and using others more *Interior* of its own; *Prayer of Quiet*, or an *Union* of the *Will* to God in a certain *Fruition* and *Contemplation* of him, quiescent from the former *Discouſing*. But these not so frequent in her first years; nor so long continued; nor so well discerned, and observed by her, as afterward.

But, in her proceeding in this holy Practice, these became more ordinary, and of longer duration, and followed with elevations of the Soul yet much higher: A *Sense of Gods Presence* in a more sublime manner; For of this *Presence* certain degrees, as She advanced in *Prayer*, may be observed in her writings, to have succeeded one another. The first step was a *Representation*, which She made

¶ Her Life.
Chap. 4.

¶ Her Life.
Chap. 10.

made to her self, of our Lord, as by, near, or within, her, (wherein yet She saith, She was not able to represent to, or within, her self any certain forme, or shape of Him, See her Life, c. 4.) The next, a fence of Gods special Presence disterring by the Supernatural effects, and influences upon the Soul, at such time received from him, whereby he intimates such his presence to it; a rest from discourse, & union of Love, &c. Such as are enjoyed in the Prayer of Quiet. See ibid. c. 27. The third, A certain knowledg, free from all dubitancy, of his Presence, not by the effects only, but by a Representation of himself to the Soul, (for as God is essentially, or substantially present in all, so, to some more highly favoured, he gives a clear and evident perception thereof); yet this not discerned by any formed appearance but, she saith, as one person may certainly know the presence of another standing by him, though in the dark. See Ib. c. 27. & c. 10. and Mansion 5. c. 1. The Fourth; An Imaginary Vision, as She calls it, or Apparition, but Internal, of our Lord, with forme and shape, See Ib. c. 28. 5. And the last, and most supream: A fence of the presence of the most H. Trinity, with a clear distinction of the Persons. See Her Life c. 34, 36. and the Additions, Mansion 7. c. 1. Letter 18. to F. Rodrigo Alvarez. To qualifie all the which honours done her, She seemed charged with those many Corporal Infirmitie; as S. Paul was, with his Thorn in the Flesh. To proceed. Now also, a total Union and suspension of all the Faculties; in which was little, or no, use of the external Senses, or of Motion. In these suspensions, again, frequent Visions; and of these, some Intellectual only, without discerning any form, or shape; other Imaginary, with form and shape. Visions, in both these manners, of our Lord Christ (as hath been said); and of Him in several conditions; as passive; or, as glorified, and infinitely beautiful (but this latter more frequent); alone, or accompanied with a multitude of Angels. Visions, of Angels, and these of a very different Splendor or Glory, one transcending another || of Saints; and this with a certain distinct knowledg, as it were after long acquaintance, what Saints they are; and, of all these, either silent, or also speaking to Her. lastly, Visions of Souls ascending out of Purgatory. Hearing also of Internal Words, mostly, as spoken by our Lord, represented as by, or within her: with whose words also contained in the Gospel, She saith she was more, moved, and sooner recollect, than with any other the most elegantly composed books || (these words somtimes coming as from a broad, sometimes as from the interiour part of the Soul, but always

|| Her Life.
c. 29. 36.

(a 2) very

|| Way of Per-
fection, c. 21.

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very clear and plain, and making a strange impression, J words consolatory, Instructive, Reprehensive; advising, and informing of things done in *absence*, all found true; of things *future*, all most surely coming to pass, (which shew the Spirit to be of God) : but all these *Words* and *Sights*, ordinarily interior, and transacted with the *Senses* of the Soul, not those of the Body. Strange *Illuminations* and *Revelations* of many *Divine Mysteries*; and suddenly infused intelligence of several passages of *Scripture*, and of *unknown Languages*. Lastly, *Extasies*, and *Raps*, & *Flights* of the *Spirit* upward, sometimes so vehement, as to raise the *Body* also by force, to a certain distance from the ground; wherein the *Spirit* seemed to be hurried away without knowing whither it went, or who carried it, or how; putting her Soul at the first in exceeding great fear, yet no way resistible; in which *Raps*, (as very violent, so short), many *Celestial Se-
crets* are discovered in an instant, without *Words*: Sometimes the Soul pierced as it were with such a mortal *Wound of Love*, as brings most intolerable pain, out of a sense of its present non-enjoyment, and absence of its Beloved; which renders Life most tedious, and Death extreamly wished for. It is needless to name more, let the inquisitive search her Books. All these *Graces*, and *Favours* came this Saint, passing through the Gate of *Prayer*, to be acquainted and honoured with.

But, in the mid'st of these supernatural Carelesses and Communications, especially when grown so high (though we see the like things, such *Extasies*, or *Raps*, and *Visions*; such *Allocutions* of our *Lord*, and of the *Holy Spirit*, not unfrequent to several Saints in *Scripture*, See *Act. 10. 10, 11.*--*2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4.*--*Act. 9. 4, 5, 6.* Again, *9, 10, &c. to 17.*--*Act. 10. 19, 20.* and, *11. 5. 12.*--*Act. 16. 6, 9.*--*Act. 20. 22, 23.*--*Act. 22. 17.* &c. to *22.*--*2 Cor. 12. 9.*--*Col. 2. 5.*) yet, when grown so high, to one that thought her self so great a Sinner, we find Her, out of Her profound Humility (for, as every ones Sanctity, so is their Humility greater) very much dejected, and perplexed; afflicted with Gods kindnes to her, and her fears increasing, as her *per-
fictions* did; and, because she could not imagine such graces, and familiarities of the Deity, and his *Saints*, competitive to such unworthiness, possessed with a strange terror, that they were some great delusions of *Satan* (only free she was from these fancies, in the time of the enjoyment of such favours).

And this her *jealousy* was further nourished, and increased; By her own observing, that many persons, esteemed of extraordinary San-

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Sanctity, and much Prayer, yet had no such divine communications? And By the inexperience also of her *Confessors*, to whom she first happened, after such fears, to apply her self; who, unacquainted with such supernatural excesses of the *Spirit*, and also discerning in her still some imperfections, easily became of the same perswasion with her self, and added to her frights; and some proceeded so far, as to forewarn others the keeping her company; when as, on the other side, neither durst She, by reaon of these fears, hardly, at some times, stay alone; some also disswaded her *Confessors* from taking her *Confessions*. To all which may be added; that, about the same time, had been discovered several *Impostures* of *Women*; who, either ambitious to procure the fame of Sanctity, or deceived by the Devil, pretended such Supernatural Elevations. Of whose miscarriages also, there were those, that did not fail to remember her.

To accumulate her misery, She is also commanded, and so her self, in Obedience, used her uttermost endeavours, though impotent, to resist, and as it were affront these extraordinary *Divine Visits*, and *Communications*, as feared to be disguises of Satan; (so small torment to her, and a thing disliked by that holy Person, Father *John Avila*, in his Letters to her); and many Prayers are made for, and by her, that God would be pleased to direct her in his Service by some other way. But all this to little purpose: the more resistance She made, the more the same, and also much higher *Attractions* and *Fervours*, still happened to her; and, from her reluctance, She only learnt this, that they were irresistible. She is also commanded, as in a case of great danger, to conceal nothing of these Supernatural accidents, nor of the effects, whatever wrought in her by them; but to manifest all, from time to time, simply and clearly to her *Confessors*, that so, though the Devil tempted, he might not hurt; and his designes, if tending to any evil, might be discovered. And here first it cost her great pains to describe such Supernatural things, and God was pleased to give her an admirable faculty in it, that at her first attempting it, seemed to her impossible. And then, She being enjoyned a strict confession of these favours, and they growing daily more transcendent, and exorbitant, this also became, as She fath, a much greater shame and confusion to her to reveal them, than to confess her greatest *Sins*; the more high and transcendent they were, being by this rendered the more incredible; and so serving still more to confirm her *Confessors* in the opinion, that they were *Satanical Impostures*, or at least but the *deliriums* of a *Woman's fancy*: the effects

(a.3) also

also, wrought in her by them, unless she would bely them, (which was a Sin), tended so much to her own Commendation, and the divulging of them to such a seeming violation of her Humility, that herein She suffered great reluctance. Now also, when She committed any Sin, and offended God, though never so little, this seemed to upbraid her with so much ingratitude upon these his so extraordinary Communications to her, and was so intolerable an affliction, and grief, that She knew not what to do with her self; and begged, on this account, either the further hindering of any such her Treacheries, and miscarriages, or the substraction of such his favours.

And thus, out of a deep humility, and sense of her own sins, and unworthiness, begetting in her a great fear of delusions, & out of the inexperience of her Confessors, came all those extraordinary Communications, and familiarities, which his Divine Majesty useth toward purer Souls; and all those wonderful Graces and perfections which these infused into her, to be divulged, and proclaimed to the world as it were by force; and that with more plain and intelligible expressions of them, than former times have used; whilst her great jealousie consulted all the Learned and Spiritual persons which any opportunity afforded her; and these again (unknown to her) related them to others. Thus came I say these favours (in a time that seemed much to require it) to be disclosed by her, seeking mean while the cure of a Person possessed, rather than the applause of a Saint, which favours other Saints of God out of the same humility, but accompanied with more confidence, have studiously concealed and hid from the World.

Now also She was commanded, further, to write the Narration of her Life, to be revised by some Spiritual Persons far distant; and shortly after, the same Narration by the jealousie of some, into whose hands it came (She also desiring it) was committed to the Examination of the Inquisition. And, when She also heard of any eminent for Learning, that opposed and spake against her Spirit, (as there were divers, being mis-informed) She procured, rather, to confess her self to them; as hoping here more Impartial dealing, and perfecter knowledg of her faults. The issue was; All turned at last to a general approbation, both from the Fathers of the Inquisition, and other Spiritual persons, to whom it was conveyed. Amongst whom Dr. John Avila, famous then in Spain for his Sanctity, in his Consolatory Letter to Her, upon his perusal of the Story of her Life, tells her, That the things in her Book were such, as befell other persons in those

those days [perhaps hitherto one of them] is, and that with much assurance, that they were from God. See *Jerome Grasicus*' Relation here annexed, and her own soyned to her Life, || concerning these *probations*; and the many *Testimonials* of the chief *Governours* of the *Church*, and other Persons of eminent learning and piety, both in her own, and latter times; an ample Collection of which you may find set before her Works, both in the *Spanish*, *Italian*, and other Editions thereof; and especially in the Preface written before her *Life* by the *Bishop of Tarassone*. And those also, who formerly most suspected and questioned her Spirit, became her greatest *Scholars*, *Patrons*, and *admirers*; and several of them, her *Imitators*, in betaking themselves to a more assiduous practice of *Prayer*.

|| Relat. 4.

She, thus honoured with so many Favours, enriched with so many Graces & Vertues, having passed through so many hardships, and so much experience; and comforted, and assured in the goodness of her *Spirit*, both this Love of God, wherewith She was wounded, begat an insatiable desire in her of communicating it to others, and of drawing all the World (if She could) to serve so kind a Master; and her Superiors seeing the effect, which the Narration of her *Life* then going about in Manuscript (though writ at first for another end) had produced on many, both Devout persons, and great Sinners, would not suffer her Pen to rest; but still put her on new work; and enjoyned her to write several Treatises to teach others this Divine *Ara of Prayer*, wherein She her self had made so great a proficiency; which task with what readiness and speed, without blots, relections, or emendations, She performed. See what is said by the Bishop of *Tarrasone*, in the extract out of his works here annexed. And indeed, her often *Digressions* to other Discourses, that seemed any way beneficial, from that primarily intended; the frequent *interposing* of her *Devotions*, *Ejaculations*, and *Colloquies* with our Lord, to which She gave way, obeying as it were the present motions of the *Spirit*, whatever way it carried her, and not able readily to break her habit of *Prayer*; the prolix *Parentheses*, that here and there are found in her Writings, as if She had no time to chuse another place for them; and her often iterated *Apologies* for these Surprizes of her self, do shew, neither her *Master*, nor *Method* curiously pre-designed; and that her Pen was *Calamus Scriba velociter scribentis*, a Scribe, of whom She had not the perfect mastery; which also sometimes her self, but very modestly, intimates.

Thus

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Thus set on work by command, we find Her in these Writings, as a Person that had her self passed through all the *difficulties* & hardships of *Prayer*, that had (for almost Twenty Years, as She saith) toiled, and rowed many times both against wind and tide ; and had tasted also all the *sweets* and solaces hereof ; and, after much patience, been exalted to the highest steps and rounds of this Celestial Ladder, we find Her in these Writings, I say, with great zeal and prudence, applying her self equally to all conditions ; both instructing, and initiating *Novices* ; and further advancing *Proficients* ; and that in such an experimental Spiritual Language, as is much better fitted for vulgar understandings, than that of the *Schools*. Here you may view Her to the weak, becoming as weak, and ranking her self amongst the greatest of Sinners, (her great Humility also really believing her self to be such), that none might despair of a timely amendment, by taking the same course ; nor, out of their unworthiness, abandon themselves as unfit for such an holy design : Shewing to these, that no condition in this World is below the benefit of Prayer ; and that, the worse any have been, the more need they have to practise it.

1. Here you may see Her: First, Endeavouring to plant in these Persons that are strangers to Prayer, and charged with former ill habits, some good desires and wishes, and the patience every day, for some *set time*, after an humble *Confession* of their Sins and defects ; resolutely to place themselves in the *Presence of God*, represented by the *Memory*, as, *near*, *by*, or *within*, them ; and to thank Him, that he will endure them so, though yet as it were Strangers, and not having the heart to speak to Him, and with their thoughts meanwhile strayed abroad after their Secular loves.

The time She recommends for their daily Devotions, is the space
[See her Life. of two hours at least, (her self spent more []); Recollection, and all
e. 8. the other great effects of prayer, being (as it is in other things) attained by much custome and practice of it.

[As for those, to whom the necessary *Acts* of *Obedience* or *Charity* permit not so much time for retirement and Prayer ; [Where *Necessary* is meant, both as to the *thing* to be done, and as to the *Person*, and *time* of, doing it ; so as that the necessity neither permits the dispatch of such busines, by another person, (on whom, without any fault or damage, it may be devolv'd) ; nor the dispatch, at some other time or hour of the day, than that allotted for prayer ; nor yet permits some other hour of the day to be assumed for Prayer, instead of

of it ; which *Necessity* seldom happens. Again, a deed of *Charity* it must be in such a sense *Necessary*, as that, things well weighed, *Prayer*, which also is one of the greatest works of *Charity*, and that to our selves, the first object of *Charity*, is not the more necessary of the two : Where note, the works of *Charity* can never bring such an evidence of their necessity, as to afford a daily or constant excuse of omitting the set-times of *Prayer* : For here, in such a constant privation of this principal duty, the Necessity of *Prayer* will become greater, and must take place of them. This cleared, now to go on].

For such I say, as are thus diverted by *necessary affaires*, she adviseth them, so much the more diligently to mingle *Prayer* with their business, by interior frequent suspirings and ejaculations interposed ; and to be the more careful to apply and exhibit by several parcels as it were, what cannot now be presented in one entire piece : To proceed (in such necessary affaires) with great advertency of not employing their thoughts wholly upon them, or suffering any total dis-Union of them from God : but interiorly often to recur to, and remind themselves of him ; and that rather with amorous, than discourfive, acts (so the *Holy Mother* saith of her self ||, that business, though of importance, had no continued possession of her thoughts, but by turns. But that her thought of God was much-what constant, and continued): To be often offering-up themselves to him (50 times a day, she saith in her *Rules*, i. e. as it were without intermission), and also their imployments, that they may be for his Service ; remembering him, for whose sake they do them ; and, that for him only they leave him ; Often to call to mind in their daily imployments the *Subject*, and the particulars, of their last *Meditations* ; Often, to make their business also the subject of their *Prayers*, since Without God they can do nothing ; and, It is he, who worketh all things in us ; and, It is not of the Willer, nor of the Runner, &c : Nor is the Planter, or the Waterer any thing, but God, that gives the growth : To examine their *Conscience*, after every action done, at whatever hour it be, concerning their defects : (See, how much work of Devotion this Holy person finds also in business) : To indeavour to forget our business as to any solicitude concerning it ; and not to suffer the thoughts to rave upon it, before, or after, the time of its dispatch, where no necessity of such preconsideration, or reflection : Lastly, in whatever imployment, to conform always, and hold their *Wills* United to *Gods*, so that there is nothing he Wills concerning them, but that they Will the same : Where she tells them, that for *Prayer*,

||Relat 1.n.27,

Jo. 15. 5.
Ifai. 26. 12.
I Cor. 3. 7.
Rom. 9. 16.
Psal. 126. 1.

(b) no

|| See Foundations. c. 10.
and her Life
c. 7.

Riber. l. 4. c.
10.

|| Letter. 8.

|| Foundation.
c. 34.

no more is necessary, than only Love, and Custome; that a true Lover, in all occurrences, is still Loving and calling to mind her Beloved: and, that it were an hard case for such, if Prayer could only be made in Cells, and Solitude; And that somtimes a better disposition for enflaming the Soul in the Love of God, and attaining perfect Contemplation, may arise from such works of Obedience and Charity rightly performed, than from the solitudes of Prayer and Meditation. But yet, that a devout Soul desires always this latter; and, detained in Martha's imployments, still longs for Marie's. Her self being asked by a Confessor of hers, how she spent the day; meaning, How she distributed it, for business, and Prayer; Her answer was this (notwithstanding the much busines passed through her hands) That, even as a Lover, that could not bear the absence of his Beloved for a moment, such a Lover was she of Christ our Lord, delighting her self with him, and always speaking to, and of, Him.

It suites to this purpose, (in our speaking of deeds of Charity, pressing-in to abbridg the time of Prayer), what this Holy Mother || writ to a Bishop, who was very Zealous of the Service of God, and continually imployed in works of Charity, and the duties of his charge; of whom also she saith, || that he Fasted four days in the week, and did much other penance; and that he visited his Diocese on foot, &c; This Bishop having been her Confessor, and much importuning her recommending of him in her Prayers to our Lord, after some time she return'd him this account of it,---- Having (saith she) represented to our Lord the Graces which he hath done you; and which I well know; he having bestowed on you, Humility, Charity, Zeal of Souls, and of his Honour in everything, I besought our Lord for the increase of all these vertues and perfections in you, to render you every way so accomplished, as that Dignity, wherein God hath placed you, requires. It was shewed to me, that what was principally necessary to these vertues, was yet wanting to you: and that, defective in the principal, and that which is the Foundation, the work is Ruinous, and not Firm; That you wanted Prayer, as a Torch lighted, which is the light of Faith; and perseverance in Prayer, with resolution, and valour; thus breaking off that which maintaines Union, which is the Union of the Spirit; from the want of which proceeds all that dries, and dis-union which the Soul suffers, and again, such importunity of an army of Thoughts, and impertinent Imaginations, and the webemencies of natural inclinations, to which the Soul, from this aridit, and dis-union, is exposed; all which she exhorts him patiently to endure; and not, for these

these, to desist from Prayer. And afterward---When (saith she) the flesh riseth against the Spirit with a thousand sorts of deceits and dis-composures; representing to it, that one may be more beneficial in something else; as, in assisting the necessities of his Neighbours; in studying for Sermons, and governing what is committed to his charge; to this he may answer, that the first, and that of greater obligation, is ones own necessity; and that perfect Charity begins from ones self, &c. Thus she, from what she received in Prayer, to the Bishop full of Charitable imployments. And her Counsel, we may presume, had great effect on this pious Prelat, from what she writes of him, two years before her death, in her Foundations, || (I suppose of a latter date, than this Letter;) and from his resigning, when now grown more infirm, his Arch-Bishoprick of Compostella; & ending his dayes in retirement. || I will add to this, as hoping it may not be unuseful, what she relates of her self, and of her own practice, in a Letter to F. Gonzalo of the Society of Jesus, Reitor of a Colledg, and her Confessor, concerning the same subject, (multitude of business hindering Prayer) he asking her advice in it || ---There are (saith she) no Persecutions, nor afflictions, that can so much trouble me, as to have much business, that is to pass through my hands. If it be an affaire, wherein I can use any expedition, I sit up till two or three hours after mid-night to leave my Soul afterward disengaged from any further attendance of my thoughts upon it; and that I may receive no hinderance as to a thing, esteemed much more necessary. And, for the same reason, it gives me much content to leave what matters I can to be dispatched by my Sisters, though it might be done somewhat better by my self: ---For I find my self notably advanced in my interior, the more I do procure a dis-engagement from affaires. Yet, though I know this manifestly, I neglect somtimes to use my best indeavours therein [in declining business]: and I certainly experience the hurt of it: and I see that, as to this, I might use more caution, and it would be much better for me. But this must not be understood of great affaires, which may not be so abandoned, and left in the power of others. ---And I well perceive, that all that, which one doth for the better discharge of his duty, is a thing so acceptable to God, that he gives to those, so employed, in a small time that, [advancement in Spirit] that he would otherwise confer, in a much longer. Thus the Holy Mother. The sum thereof seems to be, For business of less importance, not hastily to charge our selves with it; or to leave and commit it to others,

(b 2) others,

|| See the
Bishop of Of-
ma's remarks
on her Let-
ter.

Letter 21.

thers, who may bear part of our burden, though perhaps it shall not be so well done by them, as if it had passed through our hands : For busnels of more moment, which we cannot thus transfer, to dispatch it, if capable of expedition, speedily ; and rid our hands of it ; the readiest way, totally to discharge our thoughts of it : But for affaires, that are neither to be *deserted*, or *transferred*, nor of a quick dispatch, to attend thereon with all diligence and chearfulness, as the *Will of God* ; and to expect a greater advancement toward perfection from this conformity to his will, in such necessary *employment*, than from the same time spent in *solitude* and *Prayer*. This for the frequentation of Prayer. □

See way of
Perfect. c. 29.
Foundat. c. 10.
Manif. 4. c. 1.
|| Way of Per-
fect. c. 21.

|| Agreeable
to 1 Thes.
5. 17.
Eph. 6. 18.
Lu. 2. 37.
1 Tim. 5. 5,6.
Act. 10. 2.
Lu. 18. 1.
Way of Per-
fect. c. 28.

2. Next : She instructs them : That Prayer is an *Act of loving*, rather, than *thinking* ; That one may pray much, that faith but little : (for which also she dislikes the saying over many *Vocal Prayers* un-considered, and as it were in haste ||) And, that it is not so much an employment of the *brain*, or *Intellect*, as of the *Will*, and *heart* ; and consists more in *sighing* and *suspiring* after that Object, that it is already convinced most to deserve its love, than in *discoursing* and *enventing* ; □ Like as the Prayers of the greatest and molt illuminated *Scripture-Saints* are rather frequent, and often repeated ejaculations of their Holy passions, than curious fancies, or speculations of the brain : Not, that these persons were barren in their *intellectual Conceptions*, but that the exercise of their affections, in these their Devotions, were predominant to those of their other Faculties, and in some sort silenced their working ; the strong intensiveness and activeness of the intellect, rather hindering, than furthering, the motions of the Will, because the Soul cannot be equally intent upon, nor the Spirits serve, two functions at once. □ She also tells them, that this Prayer by way of loving, and exercise of the *affections*, may with ease be much longer continued, || than that of *discourse*, because intensive thinking is tedious, and tires, but *love* is never weary, nor satisfied : That the inclinations of the Will become pliant and habituated, and easily reduced, when we please, to the embracing and passionate affecting such desirable object, as we are much practised and accustomed-to, as also those of the Intellect are. Therefore the *H. Mother* (in her *Rules*) advised her Daughters to accustom themselves to make every day many *Acts of love*, because these (faith she)

she) do enflame the Soul, and make it tender. Lastly, That such Prayer may be sufficiently performed, if we can but sigh, confess, adore, praise, promise, &c : Or, if we cannot do these, perform an act of patience, and resignation in our being able (as we conceive) to do nothing ; though to have, and to feel, devotion, or the love of God, are not the same thing, and the first may be sometimes without the second.

She faith, That many mistake, in making Prayer too active and thoughtful, and so, tedious unto them. Which is to be employed as well (with much Resignation and Subjection), in hearking, as in speaking, to God. To whom, when, in Prayer, we deplore our misery ; reveal our scruples and doubts ; consult concerning our affaires, and our better serving of him ; desire him to teach, to enlighten, to make known to us his Will, &c : it is but reason, that we attend also, and expect what he may answer to us ; what discoveries he, who then specially useth to open the eyes of the Soul ||, makes of our imperfections and faults, (who, saith she ||, gives us a thousand interiour advices in several manners, to let us know them) ; what Reprehensions and Convictions, what Consolations, what Instructions, he gives : Who, if at other times he teacheth us, & all good motions at any time, and every good thought in us, come from his Spirit, how much rather may we expect this in Prayer ? That, therefore, when we go to Prayer, we should imagine, that we go to be Taught of God in this his School, who is alwaies saying somthing to our soules, when, stilling the noyse of worldly things about us, we render our selves never so little attentive. We are (saith she ||) to procure retirement, that we may hear and understand him, to whom we speak ; and may stand attentive to that which our Lord Answers to our Petitions : Think we, that she stands silent, although we do not perceive him ? He speaks much to the heart, when from the heart we Pray to him : And, Ib. c. 34. He is your Master, and will not cease to instruct you, although ye are not aware of it, and do not discern him ; And (Mansions 2. c. 1.) she reckons amongst other calls of God, the truth, that he teacheth us, at such times as we remain before him in Prayer ; which (saith she) how rapidly soever [by our weakness] done, is much valued by him. And, in her Rules, she chargeth her Daughters to have a special care of preserving, and putting in execution, those instructions and good desires, God gives them in Prayer.

3. Now, for the Matter of their Prayer, and the best Means of
(b 3) exciting

|| Letter. 8.

|| Mansion. 5.
c. 4.

See Jo. 6. 44,
45.-14. 26.

1 Thes. 4. 9.

Heb. 8. 10, 11. 1

1 Jo. 2. 27.

1 Cor. 3. 5.

Heb. 13. 21.

|| Way of Per-
fect. c. 24.

Mansion. 4.
c. 3.

|| 6 Mansion.
chap. 7. and
see her Life,
c. 22.

See her Life,
c. 10.

exciting this *Love*, when the fire of it is not yet well kindled in them ; or, kindled, is after some time again decayed, and gone out ; she adviseth them not to lose time in thinking on no certain thing, and in neglecting here the help of the *Intellect* ; and in expecting as it were Fire from Heaven, to consume the *Sacrifice* of it self, which the Soul desires then to offer to God, with the thoughts roving here and there unemployed, or unset on work (an Errour, she faith, || that for some time she fell into her self, out of an indeavour the sooner to suspend the Faculties, and enter into Supernatural Prayer ; Gods work, not ours ; without advancing thereby either in *Prayer* or *Virtue*) ; but to serve themselves in such case, of the Brain and *Understanding*, in meditating on some moving subject ; herewith to blow this fire in the *Will*, and renew its heat. And here again ; for those Persons (among whom she numbers her self) that have not the Talent of discoursing acutely, and subtilly, with the *Intellect* on such subject ; she faith, that it may be sufficient, for the recovering of this Fire, to make use only of the *Memory*, in a bare representing of such subject to the understanding, and keeping it in mind, and as it were simply viewing, and looking upon it, till some sparks are thus struck out, that may kindle the Affections.

And here also, the *Subjects* of Meditation, She recommends to them, are not difficult, and curious ; but easie, obvious, and general, such as these (which she frequently repeats), *The true Knowledg of our selves, and consideration what we are, both as Mortals and Sinners ; How much we owe to God ; and how much we have offended Him, and how ungrateful we are toward him ; What He is ; and how much he loveth us, and what He hath done for us ; the great Humiliations and Sufferings of our Lord for our Redemption from Sin and Satan ; the Eternal Punishments and Rewards, to come ; the sudden Vanishing of all present things.* All which do serve much for intendring the heart, and begetting tears, and for the kindling, and enflaming of the *Love of God*, and our *Gratitude* toward Him, and our Study, for hereafter, no more to displease Him : when we reflect, what He, such a Person, bath done and suffered for us, such persons, to free us from such torments, deserved ; and advance us to such glories, *gratis* : Especially when such considerations are applied to our own particular. So, how much greater the true *knowledg of our selves*, and sight of our own sins is, the greater appears his kindness, and compassion, toward our selves ; and, upon this, a greater love to him, “ *To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much.* ” So, the consideration of special favours done

to

to our selves (as who is there that hath not many such, in some kind or other, done him : and, that hath not receiv'd some *special Talent* from God ?) much more excites our love of him, in the apprehending his particular love of us. For, out of *love* to our selves, we love our *Lovers* ; and one love begets another. *Non fecit taliter*, is a *Psal. 147. 204* great incentive of love : and the *H. Mother* || chides that *humble* kind || *Her Life*, of *ingratitude*, when extraordinary favours done to our selves pass *s. 10.* supinely *unobserved*, and unacknowledged by us, (and so our love of God, and zeal in his Service, thereupon much abated,) because we ought to think them *undeserved*. The last Meditation also, the *vaniſhing* of all *present things*, serves much to take off our Love from any thing else, as, not permanent ; or, if they were, not, in comparison of this Lord, worthy our Love. Such plain, and easie, *Meditations* She prescribes, as more effective for raising our Affections, than those more *subtile* and laboured, which weaken the operations of the *Heart*, by too much exercise of the *Brain*.

And, generally, she expresseth a dislike of all *painful* and *forced* de-
votions, and, that cause *inquietude* ; As to strive to think on nothing, on one side, (because the thoughts are suspended, in *Contemplation*;) or, to invent high and subtile conceptions on our subject of Medita-
tion, on the other. *Saying*, That these interior operations are to be all
sweet, and peacefull; to be done with much complealance, and many arti-|| Mansion. 4.
ficial inticements, not to affright the Soul || *And-En esta obra de espiri-|| c. 3.*
tu, quien menos piensa, y quiere hazer, haze mas. *Way of Per-||*
Mansion 7. c. 4.

With these Meditations, She much recommends the use of certain
easie and familiar *Colloquies* || (which, so frequently interposed in her
Works, shew that She was many times in *Mental Prayer*, when She || See Way of
writ): Conversing and discoursing with our Lord, as we would do
with a *Parent, a Friend, a Benefactor, or Physician, our Advocate* *chap. 25. & 28.*
and Mediator, our Brother, our Spouse, our Head, &c one bound by such
Relations to take care of us (since, faith She, we never want words to
talk with other persons, why should we, to speak with God?) Matter of
which *Colloquy* with Him none can want, save such as owe nothing
to Him; and, here, or hereafter, desire, or expect nothing from
Him. Sometimes, therefore, humbling our selves before Him; con-
fessing, and begging pardon for our many disloyalties; complaining to
Him of our many infirmities; minding him of his Promises, and the
Obligation He hath contracted, to help us; thanking him for his
great patience towards us; solacing our selves with him, as our only
comfort and delight; compassionating, and condoling with him in his
suffer-

sufferings, and the daily affronts he receives from obstinate Sinners ; [this Compassion being a pain very delightful, as proceeding from Love, and naturally following it, where the person beloved suffers ; and a devotion, wherein the faith, our Lord takes much content and Gutz,] promising, for the future, better obedience ; offering all that we have, and are, to his Service ; consulting him in our busines and

[16. Mansi. c. 7.]

Rom. 8 26.

doubts ; petitioning him for our many necessities and wants ; but always this, as to our secular needs and conveniences, (matters, the faith, of small importance,) with more indifference, and less importunity ; as in which we little know, what is best for us ; and in which, the faith, if God should sometimes hear us, peradventure there would be one soul less in Heaven ; || and of which, God hath promised, we minding nobler things, to take the care upon himself ; and the thinking of them is apt to cause some extravagation of our thoughts in Prayer, and infer some solicitude about them. ||

**|| Way of Per-
se & c. 1.**

Exclamat. 17.

**|| Way of Per-
section. chap.**

19 - c. 1.

1 Pet. 3. 7.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

Her Life c. 13.

Letter 8.

4. After this ; for recollecting of the *Thoughts*, and hindering them from extravagancy (the chief difficulty, and pain of *Prayer*, especially to those of no long practice), and for drawing the *Soul* gently into an *interior Solitude*, and retirement into it self ; First, She prescribes them in general, beforehand, as much as may be, to dispatch, and rid out of the way, all *secular affaires*, especially such as cause any present *inquietude* or anxiety, though this seemingly good and pious ; and to dismiss them, even as if we were then to *dye*. Looking upon *Prayer* (i. e. conversing with God, and hearkning to his Counsel, and the internal motions of his H. Spirit) as the most *important* busines we have in this Life, and the Source and Root of all Good to us ; To hinder also all Objects from the *exterior Senses* ; and in particular, to shut the *Eyes* ; and to endeavour to have the Object not *abroad*, but *within* them, on which their Love may busie it self ; and to speak to God, and make their addresses to his Divine Presence (which indeed is every where) not as a-far off, but *within*, the *Soul* ; to imagine Him residing there, as in a glorious Palace, and themselves, as, there prostrate before Him ; drawing the Spirits and affections thither, and calling all their forces, from the out-works of the Body, to this Center, there to kindle a greater fire of Love, and the more to melt and enflame the Heart toward God ; and there to love him with all our *Heart*, and all our *Soul*, and all our *Mind*, and all our *Strength* ; and, if they Meditate concerning any *Actions*, or *Sufferings*, of our *Lord*, to represent them to themselves in their *Interior*, and there contemplate, and peruse them.

Hence

Mark 12. 30.

Hence also she much adviseth || the practice of an internal recollecting themselves, and of continuing with, and entertaining, our *Lord, there, in Prayer, for some good space of time, immediatly after their having receiv'd the Communion, as being then of a certainty corporally present within them.* And also, at other times of hearing Mass, instructs them || to communicate Spiritually, and so to retreat within themselves unto Him,---Which (faith she) *is of very great benefit; and the Love of this Lord hereby is much imprinted in us: for, when thus we prepare our selves to receive, he never ceaseth to give, in many ways, we do not understand.*

In recommendation of this Practice of representing, & making addresses to, our Lord, as within them, she speaks much every where. The Reader particularly may view the 26th, 28th. & 29th. Chapters of *The Way of Perfection*: and the 4th. 12th. 13th. & 29th. Chapters of *Her Life*. *Way of Perfection*, chap. 28. Observe (faith she) that it concerns you much to understand this truth; that God abides within you, and that there we may abide with Him. This way of praying, although it be vocally, with much more speed, recollects the Understanding, and is a way of Prayer, that brings with it many good things, being stiled of Recollection; because the Soul in it recollects all her Faculties, and enters within her self with her God; and there her Divine Master comes, to instruct, and teach her, in a much briefer manner, than it is in other ways, and to bestow upon her the Prayer of Rest. Thus retired, She may here with her self meditate on the Passion, and here represent the Son [as Crucified], and offer Him to the Father, and not weary the Understanding, in going forth to seek him on Mount Calvary, or in the Garden, or at the Pillar. Those, who in this manner can lock-in themselves in this little Heaven of our Soul, where abides He, that created both the Heaven, and the Earth; and shall enure themselves not to behold, nor stay, where the exterior Senses distract them, let them believe, that they walk in an excellent way; and that they shall not fail at last to arrive to drink Water from the Fountain. Again, chap. 29. If he will speak, he must procure to remind himself that he hath one to speak with within him; if hearken, he hath to consider, that he ought to hear one, who speaks the most intimately to him; in summe, to make account, that he may, if he will, never disjoyn himself from so good Company, &c. In the fourth Chapter of her Life.---I endeavoured (faith she) the best I could, to carry Jesus Christ our Sovereign Good, and our Lord, always present within me, and this was my manner of Prayer. If I

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|| Way of Perfection c. 34.

|| Ibid. c. 35.

meditated on any passage of his Passion, I represented it to my self in my Interior, &c. And---Way of Perfection, chap. 29. Our Lord (saith she) teach this to those of you, who do not know it. I confess for my self, that I never knew what it was to pray with any Affection, until our Lord taught me this way. And I have always found so much benefit of this Custome, and manner of Recollection within my self, that, for that reason, I have here so long insisted on it. I conclude; he, who would attain this profitable way of Recollection (because, as I say, with the help of God it lies in our own power) let him not be weary to practise himself in what is here spoken. And, a little before, she saith, That this is not at all a thing Supernatural; but, that it depends on our Will, and that we are able to do it with that help of God, without which we are able to do nothing at all, not so much as to have of our selves one only good thought. For this is not a silence of the Faculties, but a shutting them up within themselves; [That is, in an Action, and on an Object, interieur]. Again; chap. 26. O Sisters, those of you, that cannot discourse much with the Understanding, nor can fix the thought without starting aside; accustome, accustome your selves to this [That is, procuring to have the company of our Lord within you]; take notice, that I know, that you may do it, &c.---- And, if you cannot compass it in one year, let it be in more: let it not repent you of time so well spent, &c. And so it was, that many of her Spiritual Daughters, by such directions, attained to many of her perfections. □

Secondly, For the better fixing of the thoughts also, she advised the taking some certain subject provided before hand, whereon to entertain them; and not to go to Prayer without preconsidering wherein to employ it (for which Prayer also, a subject thereof was, every night, proposed to her Religions): And this subject to be, at several times, a severall, that (saith she) the Soul be not cloyed with feeding always on the same dish: yet not therefore they to change unconstantly, and often, the subject of their Meditation at the same time of Prayer, lest so none of them happen to work any great Impression on themselves; or effect with God; who, in our requests to him, is to be overcome with Importunity, and perseverance.

Thirdly, Not able this way to effect any thing, she adviseth || to betake themselves to reading some Book of Devotion (a thing, she saith, her self used for many years, not daring to go to Prayer without one lying by her); or else, to the repeating some Vocal Prayers, or other pious matter got by heart, out of the Memory. □ In which Vocal Prayers, when used, she saith, she found this the best remedy for

See Luk. 11.

8. 18. 1, 5.

|| See Way of
Perfection.
c. 26. &c. 34.

for confining the mind from straying to Impertinencies, to keep the thought fixed, [not so much on the words, or their sense, as] on him, to whom she directed the words ||. A thing also observed and recommended by the Holy Bishop of Rochester, Fisher, in his Treatise De orando Deum || --- *Si fixus in Deo nusquam alio vagetur, magis proficit in amore Dei (qui verus precans finis est) quam si verbis, aut verborum sensu, fuerit intentissimus;* [Spoken upon supposition, that these several intentions are apt to hinder one another.] And the same, which is said here of *Vocal Prayer*, holds as true in *Mental*; or, in *brightness*; that one shall profit more in the Love of God (which is the true end of all our business), the more he thinks of God, and less of his business; which alwaies ought to be directed to God. She adviseth them also, at such times, to make use of some devout Picture of our Lord, and to discourse with Him; assuring them, that they shall never want what to say to Him, after they have once a little accustomed themselves to it; and that Himself will teach them, when willing to converse with Him, what they shall say to Him; or also, whea not able to meditate, simply to represent to themselves, by the help of the *Memory*, the *Divine Presence*, as by, near, or within, them; or, some *Mystery* of our Lords Life, or *Passion*, or some other subject, apt to endear him to us; and, wanting discourse, only to retain it in their mind and remembrance, and be often as it were looking upon it: Till, by some of these ways, they happen to meet with somthing, that begins to kindle the *Affections*; which, once excited, will easily recal the thoughts to the Object, they are taken with; or, if they do not, their wandring is both less hurtful, and less tedious. To this purpose--- *I do not require (saith she ||), that you busie your thoughts on our Lord, so as to extirpate many handsome conceits, nor that with your understanding you frame some high and subtle considerations.* *I require nothing more than this, that ye only behold, and look upon him.* Now, who disenables you to turn your eyes, although it be but for the shortest space of time, if ye can do no more, toward this Lord? If ye can look upon things the most deformed, &c.

|| Way of Per
fect. c. 24.

|| Part 3. c. 2

|| Way of Per
fect. c. 26.

5. In time of Aridities, and dulness of Spirit, if this proceed not from some Indisposition of the Body (in which case she would have Prayer for that time to be omitted, and some other good, employment taken in hand) She advised them, patiently, and resignedly to bear this Crofs; and not for it to shorten the time allotted for

(c 2)

their

their Devotion, nor retire from their standing in Gods Presence ; desiring a conformity only to his Will, and thanking him, that he will suffer them in his company ; and, when they find nothing to say to him, expecting what He may be pleased to say to them ; (which patience she, out of her experience, tells them, useth many times, unexpectedly, and on a sudden, to be rewarded with great *Consolations*, and favours) : She shews them also, how to turn these *Aridities* to their benefit ; in the minding them to reform somthing offensive to Him in their lives, whereby his Divine Majesty may be rendered more kind, and bountiful to them ; in their reflecting, at such time, on their own *weakness*, and nothingnes, and inability to stir any further in these *Spiritual* matters, than God moves them ; In their increasing in *Humility*, and self-disesteem, and in resolving to persevere in their duty, and serve God, if he please, as it were for nothing ; and without any wages, presently paid them ; which absence of present *Consolations*, and encouragements, also shews perhaps, that he puts the more confidence in their constant and resolute service, and *fidelity*, to him ; and hereby they may expect the more glory hereafter : telling them, that the chief effects of *Prayer* are, not *Gusts*, and sensible *Consolations*, (things many times more necessary for weaker Christians, and taken away by God, from others, to keep them lowly) but *Humility*, *Patience*, *Obedience*, *Indifferency*, *Mortification* of our own *desires*, & *Conformity* to Gods *Will*; things, || wherein there is much more security ; & these often times, better learnt in such *Sterilities*. It is no small fruit of *Prayer* (saith the *H. Mother* in her Letter to the Bishop of *Osme* || perswading him to perseverance) to suffer these molestations, and importunities with patience. This is to offer ones self for an *Holocaust*, in having all the *Sacrifice* consumed in the fire of *Temptation*, without saving any thing out of it.--- To continue in such posture, without extracting any thing from it, is not time lost, but very gainful to us ; for this is labouring without any interest of ours, and only for the *Glory of God*.

She also tells them : That the doing, or suffering, any thing for God [for God, i. e. to please him, and in order to that perfection the *E-vangelical Counsels* require in us], as, all *Heroick Acts* of *Christian Vertus*, *Acts* of *Penance* and *Mortification*; *Fastings*, and other *macerations* of the *Body*, and *crossings* of the *Will*, do much help to revive, and increase the *Love* of God in us, and to advance the fervour of devotion, and *Prayer*. For we *Love God* so much the more, when

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|| Way of Per-
fект. c. 17.

|| Letter. 8.

we do any thing, for which we think he *loves us*, (as when thus we deprive our selves of all other loves for his sake). And such our *love* of him begets a new desire of more *acting*, and *suffering* for him ; and these two, love and sufferings, are the mutual effects of one another. And where the Love of God is fervent, Prayer is so too. As for the *practise* of *Mortifications*, she tells them, that there are many that hurt not our health at all : That all the *pain* lies a little in the *beginning* ; And, That, *accustomed* once, all are *easie* : That, by doing *smaller* at first, we may easily ascend, and bend our Wills, to those *higher*, and more difficult.

6. Without *purifying* the *Soul*, and *reforming* their former customary sins, she tells them, that *Mental Prayer* is very *difficult* ; [I suppose, because affections, not yet taken off from vanities, are more hardly inclined toward God, the work of Prayer; nor can one entertain two contrary Loves at once] ; and, especially She had observed *Supernatural Prayer of Union*, seldom conceded to any persons, but those first strongly rooted, and confirmed in *Virtue*, (because the same *Love of God*, which advanceth them to supernatural *Prayer*, operates also in them to the perfection of Christian *Vertues*; nor can love stand idle ||) ; and particularly, rooted in *Humility*; [whence also the *H. Mother* took notice ; || That, when she most *debased* her self in Prayer, and most annihilated and confounded her self for being so miserable, and wicked, then it was, that she received the highest *Raps*, and *favours*, viz : when to her self she seem'd the most unworthy, and uncapable, of them.] For the *reforming*, therefore, of their former *life* and *offences*, which offences now begin also to appear much greater, and become much more afflictive to the *Soul*, after using Prayer, in seeing their so great Obligation to the person offended, and also, what sufferings these have already put him to ; She first directs a strict observance of, and, upon this, a flying from, and avoiding afar off, the *occasions*, that have led into them : This foreseeing, and shunning the occasions, being the great, and almost only, Art of avoiding Sin, to those, who are as yet entangled in ill habits, and not confirmed in good ones. And, amongst these *occasions*, She forewarnes them much of those, into which they are apt to put themselves, after their own conversion, out of a *zeal* of helping or doing some good to *others*; yet, from which too early adventure of theirs, to benefit others, She observed, usually themselves to receive hurt, and damage ; and often

(c 3), to ..

See way of
Perfect. c. 16.
Mansi. 7. c. 4.
Mansion 5.c.3.
Life c. 19.
|| Mansion. 5.
c. 4.
|| her Life,
c. 22. 34. 35.3.

to fall, and advance the imperfections, and weaknesses of others, by their ill example; and these their *good intentions* seldom to have good success, because their own Vertues are not yet perfected. Therefore, for this purging of themselves, She required rather of them the practice of much retirednes, and *solitude* (except when necessary duties of Obedience, or Charity, call them from it); and not to leave their Nest, and fly abroad, before well-feathered; for, to negotiate the affairs of the *World*, and keep the Mind wholly on *God*, to spend most of their time about them, and mean while truly believe the *vanity*, and *nothingness* of them, seems too hard a task for such persons; and, to make this *World* seem to them so very little, as indeed it is, such must stand farther from it. But yet for those, whose *Vertues* were already wel-grown, and *rooted*, when the Service of God, or their Neighbour, shall put them frequently on such occasions, and thrust them into the world, and common converse, she said, the Soul runs no hazard thereby, but rather reaps benefit, and converts others by the sight of their Graces and perfections.

After this; as the *Love of God* grows stronger in them, She now invites them to the making scruple of offending so good a Lord by any *sin* at all, though seeming never so *small*, and *venial*, *wittingly*, and with a preadverency of it: For that any such seems, after such *friendship* made with our Lord by *Prayer*, and, a special *Presence* of Him still accompanying, and looking on, them, no small affront.

|| See Way of
Perfect. c. 41.
Her Life, c. 13. That therefore, for this, at the first, they are to stand, both as to their words, and company, and converse, upon a very strict guard, || till a custome and habit of the fear, and reverence of God, is acquired; for that, afterward, they may walk with more liberty, nor will this be so painful unto them; nor are such, as have attained to some perfection, observed to commit these lesser faults, (though exposing themselves, for Gods sake, to all occasions), not out of an *actual advertency*, and watchfulness so much, as out of a well-rooted habit therein, now grown easie unto them.

This for *New Beginners*. But, for those further advanced in this *Holy Art*, and such, as, through the Divine Goodnes rewarding their industry, have already arrived to some degree of *Supernatural Prayer*, wherein the understanding perceives it self to be illuminated, and the will to be moved toward God more immediatly by *himself*, & not by the usual manner of any precedent *object*, or *operation* of the *Soul*; producing such effect; and, which consisting of a more special Pre-

Presence, and a certain *Contemplation* or *Intuition*, and *Fruition*, of the *Divine Majesty*, perfecteth much more; and produceth far richer effects in the Soul, than the former Prayer performed by *Meditation*, and *Discourse*.

1. She warnes them, in the beginning of such *Recollection*, and *Repose* of the Soul, contentedly to *yield* to, and indulge it: and not to reluct (as Novices, not well discerning such *Recollection*, do), nor to think all that time lost in *Prayer*, that is not spent in *Meditation*, and *Discourse*; nor, by these, to seek still that, which they have already found (for there are two culpable Extreams, both, in *pursuing* *Meditation*; and in *declining* of it): But, here, to exercise some *Acts* of *Humiliation*, *Love*, and *Contemplation* of such an infinite Beauty, and Goodnes, as now begins, by degrees, to discover it self unto them; to silence, as much as they can, the Understanding, and wait upon our Lord; and to take heed of disturbing the *Divine operation* in them by their own acting; and not now to speak, but hearken.

2. Next; Whilst the *Will* and *Affections* have a quiet fruiti-
on of the Divine *Presence*, and stand United to God, if the *Cognoscitive* Faculties cannot be so easily composed, and fixed, as the *Will* is, but with a multitude of straggling thoughts distract its quiet, as many times it happens in this first Degree of *Supernatural Prayer*; here also She counsels them, to slight, and neglect their extravagations, (the reflecting on which keeps them more in mind; and which sooner cease by their being contemned, than contended with;) and not, by a solicitude of reducing them, for the enjoying of a greater repose, to lose that already possessed.

3. Again; She having observed, that many, either out of a *false humility*, in thinking it *pride* for such sinners to aspire to such extraordinary perfections, and to endeavour to procure such *Conversation*, and *Familiarity*, with his *Divine Majesty* (and pride indeed it is, if, relying on their *own forces*, and not only on the *Grace of God*, and always, to a good end, they desire such things); Or else, out of the great satisfaction they already find in the Celestial favours they are admitted-to, in these first beginnings of *Supernatural Prayer*, so far transcending any secular contents, or delights, do here sit down, and acquies, without attempting any further progress, thinking they have attained all, that in this world can make them *happy*;

happy; She, as though nothing almost were already gainted, discovers many richer, and more valuable treasures, yet behind; and so provokes them to an higher flight; minds them, that, as this Object, on which their love now is placed, is infinite; so the Communications of it, to Souls of generous resolutions, and wholly resigned, are experienced to be still greater, and greater, as it were in infinitum; and the effects of it in them, and their love to it, still to increase proportionably; nor is this love ever to be satiated; but, the more of its object it discovers, and enjoys, the more it longs, and would give all the world for any the least further addition to it. || She opens to them several Spiritual Mansions one more interiour than another, till they arrive at the chief Chamber of Presence, wherein his Divine Majesty appears in his greatest Glory, and attractions.

¶ Ecclis c. 24.

29.

*Qui edunt me ad buc exu-
ent, & qui
bibunt me, ad-
buc sicut.*

¶ Her Life.

c. 27.

¶ Way of Per-
fect. c. 18.

From Prayer of Recollection, or Quiet (as She calls it), the lowest step of Supernatural Prayer, She leads them up to that of Union; from these to Extasies and Raptus; Wherein she tells them, of the swift Impetuositie, Soarings, and Flights of the Spirit, carried upward as it were by force; and not without fear, at first, of a present dissolution; (and some like Flight she imaginis that to be, which the Souls of Saints take at their Death); of the Darts, the Wounds, of Love, and the most bitter-sweet pains thereof: Interiour Visions, Words, Revelations, suddenly infused Science, and understanding of the greatest Mysteries, and Celestial Secrets, and of unknown Tongues; And an intellectual speaking unto the Soul in the interior part thereof, without any formed words, Exterior or Interior, at all || frequent Company of our Lord, Angels, glorified Saints; things mentioned before. Lastly; after these Visions, replenished indeed with great delights, but very short, and violent, suspending the senses, constituting the Spirits, accompanied with great bodily pain, disenabling a person for the time as to secular employments, &c. (for the Contemplative also bear great Crosses ||) She discovers unto them an Union more calme, and tranquil, and permanent; a fruition of the Divine Presence perceived in a more extraordinary manner, and an excessive Joy received therefrom; but this, now, without any Rapt. or Extasie (which usually cease in such Souls), and without the suspension of their Senses, or other Faculties. Which Divine Presence is now continued to the Soul, and the Soul quietly enjoys, and rests consolated with it, in the midst of worldly affaires, which, mean-while, it dispatcheth; and in the mid'lt of any crosses, which, with little sense, it undergoes; and, whilst the inferior part of the Soul [or the Cognoscitive faculties,

as

as the *Holy Mother* expresseth it elsewhere ||] is employed, and suffers, and is in *Martha's* condition, the *Superior*, or interior, part, || See Rela. 3. or the Spirit [or the Will, and Affective faculties] resteth in the fruition of God, and is in *Mary's*. Though this *Presence of God*, or sense of it, is not always equal, but sometimes more, sometimes less; || See Mansion Yet so, that, whosoever the Soul applies it self to this Contemplation, She finds within her this Divine Company; though not seen so 7. c. 1. clearly by her, except at such times as God pleafeth more to manifest Her Life, c. 17. Way of Per- himself to her. || fect, c. 31. Jo. 14. 21. 23. 2 Cor. 6. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 16. 6. 17. 19.

4. After the *H. Mothers* discovery to them, of these many Ascents of Prayer, and of a kind of Celestial Court kept, here on earth, within a Soul so highly favoured. In the next place, that these gradual Elevations may not seem a matter only of Spiritual Curiosity, and gust, She takes much pains in a frequent describing the variety of the Effects, and Graces, conferred by them, transcending one another, and answerable, in their dignity, to the several heights of Prayer; to set all devout Christians on such a Quest; not so much for the singular Consolations to be enjoyed therein, as for the perfection of virtues to be attained thereby, and for the great pleasure and delight, which his Divine Majesty receives from such familiarity and communication with Holy men.

By these high Communications and discoveries of the Divine See, for many Perfections, and Beauty. 1. Then, she saith, ariseth such an of these, her ardent, and unsatiable, Love of God, that this Saint professeth of her self, || after some ravishing Visions she had received of our Lord, that she would rather chuse to endure the greatest torment in the world joyned to her to the end thereof, so the reward might be the least degree of a perfecter knowledg, and fruition, of God in the next (for, who knows him more, loves him more), than go to Heaven presently with the possession of a Glory, never so little less.

And, so great was her Zeal of his Honour, and grief for the great injuries and affronts, that our Lord suffered, in those times, from the Hugonots, or Lutherans as she calls them, then much prevailing in the Southern parts of France, demolishing the Churches and Altars, and Violating all Sacred persons, and things, That she faith || she, not able, as being a woman, and that of no worth, to do him other Service, erected those her new Foundations, chiefly for this end, to endeavour with continual-Prayer, and rigid Penances, performed therein, to appease the Divine wrath for the great sins of Christendom, and to implore his assistance to the Catholick Clergy,

(d)

|| Way of Per-
fect. c. 1. --- &
c. 35.

|| Ibid.

Her Life.c.19.

and all other Defenders of the true Faith ; and to procure the Conversion of so many unfortunate Souls, seduced into such gross impiety,---- It seems to me (saith she ||) that I would have laid down a thousand Lives for the aide, and recovery of one Soul of those so many, that in this way perished. But seeing my self a Woman, &c. Hence also such an ardent desire to be continually alone, and in Prayer, i. e. in keeping company, and discoursing, with God.

2. Here is gained such a profound Humility, by the Soul's plainly discovering its own nothingness (from these nearer approaches of Gods greatness) and, by the clearer sight of the Divine Influences ; the Soul now perceiving, that not any thing of that, where-with she is accomplished, is of, or from, her self, but totally Gods ; that it seems now impossible to her, that she should be tainted with any Vain-glory. And this not so much by resisting or repelling it ; as by forgetting, or not having any suggestions of it, as the Soul being wholly employed, and taken up, with the thought and the desire, of Gods Glory. Nor do her own Praises, heard, now move her any more, than those of a Third Person ; nor is she willing (as formerly) to forbear a good work, for avoiding them. And also, when the Divine Favours done her are, upon some necessary occasion, related by her self, they seem to her as those spoken of a Third Person ; nor hath she reluctance, as formerly, that others should know them, looking only at Gods glory herein ; and thinking, that these, the greater they be to her, the more discredit her, and represent her still worse, that, of so great grace, hath made so small profit.

3. Here such a sight of her own misery, and defects, is discovered to the Soul, by approaching the nearer such a Divine Light, and Purity, as she takes her self for the greatest Sinner, and the baslest thing in the world, and is not able to think of the faults, or imperfections abroad, but only of her own ; in which she can perceive none so unexcusable as her self, because none, so unworthy, seem to her to have been so much tolerated, so much courted. The remembrance also of her former sins, and offences, becomes now more frequent, and much more afflictive to her : But this alwaies with a peaceful and comfortable sorrow for them, never despairing of Gods favours to the Soul, but more endearing it, and esteeming also the feeling of this pain a Favour ? || The H. Mother in the 6th. Mansion || faith of her self. That how much more Graces and Favours she received from God, so much more increased the pain for her Sins, and that she much more thought of these, than of the other, which were carried away

|| Her Life
c. 30.
|| c. 7.

as with a Flood; But this of her sins, like mud, stayed still behind, and revived in her memory, and was a very heavy Cross---That it no way relieved this pain, to believe, that our Lord had already pardoned and forgotten these her sins; but rather increased it, to see so great a goodness, and so much favour, shewn to one, deserving Hell. And that now all the fear is, not in regard of ones own pain, or Glory; but, lest, God letting them go out of his hand, they should return again to a condition, that appears so wiserable. And herein, she saith, our Lord sometimes helped to advance her apprehensions,---Representing to her her former Vanities and faults, and giving her also to understand them, much more aggravated, than she could have imagined: Shewing to her somthing of Hell-torments, to signify to her, from what he had preserved her; and telling her, how much she owed him, doing so many favours to her, even whilst she committed such offences against him, &c. See her Life, chap. 34. 3 2. 22.

4. Again; here ariseth in her, so tender a Sense of her any way offending God in the least matter with advertency, proceeding, not from fear of punishment, (unless *pena damni*, the pain of losing, and being absent from God); but from a particular perception, of the Divine Presence looking on her the while; and of the *dishonour* done to so great a Majesty, (now much more clearly discerned by her,) in her preferring such base things before it; and of the great *ingratitude*, and unkindnes that such offence seems to carry with it toward so good, and so obliging a Lord, that the Soul begs to lose all these his favours rather, than to endure such a *torment*; unless he will preserve her, for the future, from such great disloyalty.

5. Here, such an *hate* and loathing of this world, and present things, now, upon such fore-tast of things *future*, and *divine*, (unless at times when God permits somwhat the forgetting of them), as that death is continually wished for; and the Soul, in the midst of the Worlds best entertainments, finds it self as in a great *Solitude*, or *Desert*, offended even to eat, drink, and sleep, to see, hear, or smell, the most grateful objects it affords: and pleased only with the *pain* of her *Love*, and any *actings*, or *sufferings* for his sake, on whom she is enamoured, and any manner of service done to his indigent Members and Relations; in whom she represents him to her self, and herein receives much consolation || Not having power to entertain secular matters with a continued thought on them, as formerly, but by certain *vicissitudes*, and with Devotions interposing. [I have a much continued thinking on God (saith the H. Mother ||) and though I am treating of (d 2)

|| Mat. 25. 43.

|| Relation 1.
n. 27.

Her Life.
c. 3c.

*of other matters, without my procurement, I know not who doth awaken me : and this not alwaies, but when I treat of matters of importance : and such things busie my thoughts with intervals, and not perpetually.] Afflicted to converse with others ; and also forgetting her own secular necessities, or conveniences. Equal, and not much altered upon any prosperous, or sinister accidents ; as neither of these much valued, heeded, or thought on, the one much desired, or the other declined ; and wondring now, how the *death* of Paents, or Friends, or other secular mis-haps have before caused its grief. And here is also attained such a perfect obedience, and conformity to the *Divine Will*, upon a fuller sight of his infinite Wisdome, and Providence, as begets a great liberty of *Spirit*, and indifference to all events, so as the mind can neither be much joyed, or afflicted, concerning what ever happens, and remains always, as to these, free from *Complaints*, and doth business without any solicitude, and with much les, than formerly, confidence, or reliance on its own endeavours ; knowing, that it is God doth all that is good, and understands better what ever he doth, than the Soul, what she desires. ||*

II Mansion. 15.
c. 3.

1 Cor. 13. 5. 7.

6. The not seeing, or staying upon, or being much afflicted, or disquieted with, the *faults of others*, or impatiently desiring their speedy amendment, as formerly ; the Soul being, straight, introverted from them, into its self, and easily conforming to Gods will, and time, concerning their redres ; and feeding its thoughts rather on some good discerned in them * so likewise, not remembiring any injuries, or offences, or molestations, receiv'd in the World, save only in *transitu*, and in a glance, and with the mind suddenly retiring from them to things more affected. Hence do such persons speak well of all the world, except themselves ; are free from suspicions, and interpret all things in the best, and most charitable, sense, (the other, as offending God, so diminishing the love to our Neighbour) ; and so are free from murmuring against, or speaking ill of, any : For who dwell so much at home, and suffer themselves to see no faults abroad, talk of none ; And, the *Love of their Neighbour*, possessed in so high a degree, (like that, of some dear friend,) covereth and excuseth his faults. Eminent was this *Saint* in this Vertue, even from her Noviceship. See Relat. 1. Art. 25. & Her Life c. 6. Where she faith, that she procured of her self, and others, to observe this, with great endeavour. And, that they used to say ; where she was, their backs were safe. And, in a Letter to a Religious Woman that complained to her of the multitude, and the qualities, of those of her Society, she faith ; that she freed her self of the like trouble thereof, in the Monastery where

where she lived, by not observing their *defects* (provided one bear no office), but confining her mind and thoughts, as if there were in the world only God, and her self.

7. A vehement desire in the Soul of doing much *penance*, and *mortification*, and of any afflictions, (not exceeding strength) for the love of God; now not wondring so much, as formerly, at those great things which the *Saints* have suffered for Him, as knowing by experience, how God afflicts and transforms the Soul, and changeth its former weaknes into valour || ; and, how perfect love casts out all fears. Also the nor grieving, but *rejoycing*, and receiving Consolation in *Sickness*, or other *Crosses*, and sufferings, that she hath som- thing to offer to our Lord, in return for His; and the being not able to desire repose, and content here, seeing a contrary life lived by her Spouse, except the peace and content, that ariseth from these sufferings, which is very great. ||

Therefore was this Saint accustomed, in the acute sense of her greatest *Pains*, to make this *Obligation* of them to God, that, if it pleased Him to give her Patience, and that it were for his Service, She was willing to have them so continued upon her until the Day of Judgment. And, when her Arme was broken by a fall, she said to her Daughters that stood by her; That she would not for any thing have wanted this *Suffering*; and presently made use of it to consider the *Racking* of our Lords Armes upon the *Cross*: though this so great a suffering, that she was never afterward able to Cloath her self, or put her Veile on her Head, till her death.

She used to commend, and call *Pain* the reward of Pain; and, when God sent any, accepted it as a *Recompence* of some former Service done Him. And, in her beholding some great *Sufferings* of others, either, admiring their *Patience*, she desired, God giving her the same Patience, to suffer the like; or, compassionating their great *pains*, She requested a Translation of them on Her self. And more than once were her wishes in this kind heard, and fulfilled. See *Her Life*, chap. 5. & chap. 33. And these her desires she confesseth || , God answered in so plentiful a manner, that she in her youth was the *Love* of wont to say sometimes, O Lord, I would not have so much: But (she faith) still as our Lord gave her them, so he increased her strength to bear them. Hence also she had no rest, till she had not only reduced her Order to its *Primitive rigor*, and severity, but added several austernities to it; and yet more she attempted; both as to *Courseness* of *Cloathing*, and of *Diet*; endeavouring to live only on *Pulse*, and to wear (d 3)

See *Bish. of Tarassonne*.
part 2. c. 5.

See Ribera
Vir. S. Teres.
l. 1. c. 18.

See Additi-
ons to her
Life. - Ribera
l. 4. c. 18.

¶ Letter. 32.

Her Life
c. 36.

¶ Ribera l. 4
c. 10.

¶ Letter. 59.

wear their innermost garment of course Cloathes till the practise of these things, for some small time, by Her, and her Spiritual Daughters, discovered them inconsistent with any tolerable Health ; and so they were prohibited by her Superiors.

Hence also She had an ardent desire to *found* her Monasteries rather in *Poverty*, so to have a more immediate dependence on the Divine Providence, and to exercise *Faith* and *Hope* in God ; and to expose her Religious to more hardship, and Mortification ; and cut off all Superfluities, and excess, and the secular cares, which accompany a Revenue.

Hence it was also, that She, much longing to imitate the great *Penances* of that holy Hermite *Catharine de Cardona*, and, prohibited it by her Confessors, considering her debility, she had a thought, whether it were not better to neglect the observance of this their restraint. When our Lord was pleased to admonish her that he valued *Obedience* more, than *Penance*.

From the same high value of any *Suffering* it was, that, being much obliged to her Brother *Laurence de Cepeda* (then by her direction much given to *Prayer*), for a Token of her gratitude she sent him a *Cilice*; for (saith she ||) when you cannot easily recollect your self in *Prayer*, and when you feel an inclination to do somthing [that is, some *Mortification*] for God, this serves much to awaken Love : [judging of its effect in others, by that in Her self]. And when (saith she) we find our selves once touched with this Love, it brings us so great a content to do any thing for God (though it be, rather, nothing we do), that I would have you to try it. [make some use of her Present].

From the same great delight she took in mortifying her self it was, that, imagining the *Conversation* she held with some *Spiritual Persons*, with whom she treated the matters of her Soul, and the affection she bare to other great Servants of God, and the solacing her self with them, was too much *addiction* to the *Creature*, she had a purpose, for the future, to deprive her self of it (which was all the content this World afforded her), had not our Lord signified to her, that He was well pleased, and she benefited, by it ; only charging her, that, in such converse, her words should always be well weighed, and pious. And

See || the same resolution of dissolving her former frequent conversation with her Brother *Laurence*, a great *Benefactor* to her Monasteries, upon the same fear, lest her affection to him should not keep due bounds, of whom she speaks thus in her Letter to the *Priorets* of *Sevil* || The affection I bear to my Brother is great. Yet I assure you for truth, that it is a Consolation to me to be so remote from him. I cannot guess

guess the reason, unless it be, that the consents of this life are afflictions to me, (perhaps for fear I should be too much linked, and afflected to any thing of it); and so it is better to withdraw my self from the occasions.

The like effect of Self-Mortification was the burning of her Book of *Meditations on the Canicles*, upon her *Confessors* bare command, who thought this no fit subject for a Womans pen, though this written also by the command of a *Confessor* ||; without considering the pains it had cost her, the excellent matter contained in it, and benefit receivable by it; nor she ignorant, that another *Confessor*, acquainted with it, or perhaps the same left to second thoughts, would soon have reversed this Sentence. But this she looked on as a blemish to her *Obedience*. In the observance of which she was so punctual, that she shewed her self very unwilling, that her Superiours at any time should give her a *reason* of what they commanded her; that so she might have no other satisfactory Motive of her action, besides only their command. *Dominicus Bannez* her *Confessor* (only to try her submission) proposing the like *Doom* concerning the *Relation of her Life*, she, with much equality of Spirit, desired him to view it; and, if his Sentence was such, she was ready to cast it into the Fire; By which she seems, for the great love of Suffering, not only to have trod the World, but her self also, under her feet, and to have delighted in any thing that might much afflict her. I might add to these another thing of great Mortification to her; the forbearing for about a Year the use of *Mental Prayer* (after so much content, and so great Favours, received in it) out of a great, but indiscreet, and culpable, *Humility*, because she thought her self most unworthy to receive so great favours from God, whilst she was so wicked, and served him so ill; The debarring her self also from reading *Spiritual Books* treating of *Prayer*, and *Mystical Theology*; because it seemed inconsistent with her humility, to think (and she could not but think so) her self to have already attained those *high degrees of Prayer*, they described. *But Saints-Lives* she read willingly, which made her blush at the sight of her own imperfections, and how short her performances were of Their's.

Sos (in *Her Life*, c. 7.) speaking of her *Fevers*, and other Diseases; *These evils* (faith She) *I now so little regard, that I do often rejoice myself that I have them; as thinking that, after this manner, I do in somthing serve our Lord.* And the *Bishop Tarassonne Vir.* of *Tarassonne* relates; that, about a year before her Death, she said to *Him*: That though she had so great a desire to *see God*, yet it was counterpoised with another, a desire to *serve and suffer more for Him*,

¶ *Circpect of the Love of God.* c. 7.

Bishop of Tarassonne part 2.
c. 2.

*See Ribera
Vit. S. Ter. 1-4.
c. 15.
Her Life c. 7.*

*See her Life,
c. 30.*

part 2. c. 14.

of which *Death* would deprive Her. This of the 7th. effect of supernatural Prayer very eminent in this holy Person; desiring, and rejoicing in, all manner of sufferings.

8. The *Vertues* become so habituate and strong; and the *Contemplation*, or *Vision* of the Soul to God so fix't, as that no *Converse* with any sort of persons, or *temptations* and occasions of sin, occurring (to all which they now freely expose themselves for his Service), do corrupt the *one*, nor *busines* hinder, or disturb the *other*; the contrary of which usually happeneth to new Beginners.

9. An Heroick resolution, out of the fervour of Divine love, and in-gratitude to his favours, alwaies to do, not what is *lawful*, or what is *good*, but what ever, of several Good's, shall appear the better, and more acceptable, and perfect.

And such a *Vow* this
See Ribera
I. 4. c. 10.
& Histor. Ge-
neal Carmel.
Discalceat I. 1.
c. 5.

Saint courageously made to her self, *Anno D. 1560.* 22 years before her Death (by which we may imagine how strangely cautious and circumspect, in what she did, must needs be the following course of her

life; and what an infinite number of generous actions such a Resolution must produce). *A Vow, I say, to do in all things, that which tend- ed to Gods greater Glory, and Service, and to more Perfection.* Which, at first, made thus in General, and causing many scruples in her, and much trouble to her Confessors, consulted by her, to discern, in so many different *actions* continually occurring, which was the *more perfect*, and to be preferred, after her, some five years, observance of it through these difficulties, it was thought fit by her Superiours to be thus altered and qualified: That it should oblige her only in those matters and actions, which her Confessors, when consulted by her in Confession, should resolve, and determin to her to be such. Whereby she seems released, in matters of *lesse moment*, from scrupulously discussing which of them is the *more perfect*; or also from consulting in every such *doubt* her Confessors. But still, as to all actions or matters, *clearly known* to her to be of *greater perfection*, here seems no relaxation, and, as to these only, how ponderous a Vow is this? And, In order to this, how strictly she weighed all her *inclinations*, and *actions*, appears from those many *scruples* of hers, (mentioned by her in the latter end of, and the *Additions* to, her *Life*, and elsewhere,) which ordinarily some *interior* words heard from our *Lord* removed; and recomposed her mind.

10. To these Effects may be added the never having any thing suggested or presented to her in these interior, *supernatural*, *Communications*, contrary to the *Doctrine* of the *Church*; or to a most

most strict obedience to her Superiors; or, Singular. A thing very different from the new Spirits, and Enthusiasmes, of the present age.

11. The constant fulfilling and verifying in the event of those things that were interiorly heard in Prayer; which also were many times related in publick, so soon as foretold, to try the truth of the Spirit by the issue.

12. A Concession of the Petitions of such advanced Souls, according to the promise so often mentioned in the New Testament, See Mar. 21, 22, --- Mark. 11. 24. --- Jo. 14. 13 - 15. 7. --- Jam. 1. 5, 6. --- Jo. 3. 22. 5. 14, 15.) even as to secular matters, in anything that they do earnestly and confidently recommend to God; they not being able to ask fervently, what the Divine Majesty is not pleased to grant them; and perceiving by their affections in Prayer, when their requests are accepted. For, though it may be said of every one, that he receives, what he asks according to Gods will; or, when the Divine Will is pleased to grant it: Yet these Saints are further, by the Holy Spirit (which only fore-knows Gods Will, ||) pre-inclined, || Rom. 8. 26; only, to ask, with that fervour, and confidence, which the same Spirit gives, what is according to his Will; who also have, many times, a pre-assurance, before, or in, their asking, of their obtaining it, and as the H. Mother saith ||, when not thinking on it, are interiorly put in mind to ask it. See the favour, in this kind, promised, and done to this our Saint, in the 35th. Chapter of her Life. || Her Life. c. 35.

Such she describes the rich effects of these higher Degrees of Prayer, to provoke our pursuing the possession of them by all such means; whereby it is in our power assisted by Gods Grace to prepare, and pre-dispose our selves thereto; the Apostle having first warranted such an holy Ambition, so much confident in God, as despairing of our selves. ||

|| 1 Cor. 14. 1.
|| Her Life
c. 13.

5ly. In these matters of Spirit several persons having been deceived by the strength of Imagination, others by the delusion of Satan, whose malice will be sowing Tares, where God doth Wheat; and whose Pride aspires in every thing to imitate the Divine Works, so far as he hath power, or permission, She, having had also experience herein, and become a prudent Discerner of Spirits, shews them the ways, how the operations of the fancy, or of the evil Spirit may be known from those of the good. That, 1. For Imaginations; they have not such a clearness, and certainty free from doubt, or mistake; nor make such a powerful, and during impression on the

(e) Spirit,

Spirit, as those interieur ~~acts~~ Supernatural do. 2. For Impressions, Supernatural, (i. e. those exceeding the force of our Nature to produce them), that those of Satan, however it be manifest, that they are thus Supernatural; and however gustfull also they be, for the present, yet they end still in aridity, inquietude, dis-satisfaction and darkness, of the Soul (though we not knowing for what); or are accompanied also with vain-glory, singularity, curiosity, disobedience to Superiors: As on the contrary the interieur actings of Gods Spirit are known by all the fore-mentioned Effects; more light in the Understanding, growth in Virtue, more Humility, strict Obedience, and conformity to Superiors, an exact Veracity in what is spoken, a great freedome from any curiosity. An eminent humility in this Saint, Who, though she had so many Visions, and Revelations, yet never had the ambition, or temptation, to desire any not Communicated to her, as thinking her self most unworthy of those freely offered. Nor did she presume (keeping alwaies an humble distance) to ask of our Lord, treating her so familiarly, the Resolution of any Question, or doubt, in Theology, or other matters, though by some solicited, and put-upon such requests. Letter 18, To her Confessor, Rodrigo Alvarez, desirous to learn somthing of her concerning Paradise. I never (saith she) have applied my self, (nor dare I), to desire any thing further than our Lord is pleased to shew me. For presently I should imagine the Devil would deceive me-- Nor ever was I (glory be to God) curious to know any thing, &c. She teacheth them also how to make advantage of Satans temptations, and to turn his Evil to their Good, and render this enemy thence-forward afraid to tempt them, that so he may not increase their Virtue; and shews them, how weak, and cowardly an adversary he is, where he finds resistance. And the severe Trial her Spirit underwent, hath, in a great part, removed those doubts, and jealousies of delusions, which this Holy Exercise, in any Supernatural accidents, formerly laboured under; and devout persons give themselves to Prayer, and alspite to Perfection with les fears, and apprehensions of danger, in those extraordinary Transportts, and Elevations, through which so holy a Soul hath declared her happy passage before them.

6. Lastly; She acquaints them, that Supernatural Prayer is not had always when we will; and, when had, is sometimes more, somtimes less; That the chief means to attain it, is frequent Mental Prayer, Purity from committing any, foreknown, and unsurprizing, venial Sin; Heretical acts

acts of *Virtues*; especially of *Humility*, *Obedience*, and *Charity*: (*Obras quiere el Señor* ||); Much Mortification and Penance †; and a perfect Detachment, and clearing of our *Affections* from the friendships of the Creature, and giving our selves wholly to God, and confidently undertaking difficult matters for his Service. Meanwhile; that, in the deficiency, or absence, of such Supernatural Attractions, they are humbly to return to the *Prayer of Meditation*; and---To take care (saith she ||), when ever the one Water [that from Heaven] shall fail, to procure the other water, [which our selves draw out of the Well]. And for the subject of such *Meditation* she recommends the frequentation especially of these two; the first, of the *Knowledg of our selves*. Of which she saith in her Life c. 13. *That it is never to be utterly given over*; *Nor is any Soul in the way of Prayer so great a Giant, that he hath not need many times to turn a Child, and suck again*.---*That there is no state of Prayer so high, wherein it will not be necessary to turn again often to the beginning*: *And this point of the knowledg of our selves, and of our sins, is the daily Bread which must be eaten with all the meat (how delicate soever it may be) of such, as are in this way of Prayer*. *And in the Way of Perfection, chap. 39. Take care of this* (saith she), *that in the beginning, and end, of your Prayer, how high soever the Contemplation be, ye compleat all in the Knowledg of your selves*. *And if such Contemplation be from God, although ye desire or design no such thing, yet ye shall do this very often*; because such *Prayer* brings with it *Humility*, and always leaves us with more light, to discern how small a thing we are. The second; The *Meditation of the Life and Passion of our Lord*. With some passage of which, *Francis Borgia*, sometime Duke of *Gandy*, directed the H. Mother still to begin her *Prayer* ||, this being the readiest way to beget an ardent *Love* of our Lord in us (for how can we love one, we do not think of?) and a fervent desire to *do*, or *suffer*, like things for his sake, as he, for ours. (And it is observable, that the usual entertainments of Holier Souls in Supernatural *Prayer* also, are some Representations to them of the same subject; somthing of the *Words*, or *Actions*, or *Sufferings*, of our *Lord* here on earth.) To these two therefore, she exhorts the highest Contemplatists often to return; to think, what we have been, and still are of our selves; and who this *Lord* is, and what He hath done and endured, for such as we are, &c. And, after all her soarings so high, and carrying up her Schollers to the Speculation of all that variety of Supernatural Communications, *sicut Aquila provocans ad volandum pullos suos*; She lets fall her Wings, (c 2) and

|| Mansion.

c. 3.

† *Ibid.* c. 2.

c. 18.

|| Her Life.

c. 18.

c. 18.

c. 18.

c. 18.

|| Her Life,

c. 24.

See 6 Mansions.
7. Her Life.
13. Mansion. 7.
14.

and returns to mind them ; that, as there be seasons of great *Consolation*, when those rich, and undeserved Favours are done the Soul in Prayer, so there are certain times also of *Spiritual Desolation*, and these not unfrequent ; (see the Description of several, she suffered ; in *Her Life*, c. 30, & 33.) when our Lord will have the Soul to know, what a nothing she is in her self ; and what great things He doth for her : Times, wherein we must return again to our first Principles, and practice of *Meditation* ; and sit down in the lowest place, till it please our Lord to exalt us higher. Thus much of her *holy Lessons*.

Attracted by the many allurements here recited, we find divers Learned Men in Spain, by her *Counsel*, or *Example*, in the taking her *Confessions*, or reading her *Writings*, forced as it were, out of their *Library* into their *Oratory* ; retiring for some Months, or Years, to spend their time in more continued Devotions. By which they themselves arrived to the like Degrees of *Supernatural Prayer* ; and could justifie her Descriptions of these by their own experience ; And the Elevations and Favours they before rationally collected to be from God, by the excellent Effects they saw wrought in *Her*, now they happily found to be so, by those in themselves ; and could answer *Her*, as the *Samaritans* did the *Woman* there, to whom our Lord first manifested Himself, that they knew these things no more on *her Relations*, but *their own discoveries*. Of whom the faith in the 12th. Chapter of *Her Life* ; that she knew some Learned Men, who, in a very small times practice, had made a very great progress therein : and that hence she collected *Learning*, if it were accompanied with *Humility*, to be a great treasure, and afford much advantage to this *Holy Exercise*. And see, in the second Chapter of *Her Foundations*, that Learned Dominican Peter *Juannez*, after his having for sometime taken her *Confessions*) retiring for the space of two years into a remote, and solitary House of his Order, there to give himself to Prayer. After which time recalled (much against his desire) by his Superiors to *Avila*, for other employments, this Saint saith of him, that in what before he secured *Her only by his Learning*, now he confirmed by his experience of the Spirit, which he had very great of things Supernatural, and see more concerning the Raps and Extasies of the same person in the 34. Chap. of her Life. And see the like eminency herein of *Vincens Varron*, (another Learned Person of the same Order, and Confessor to her Father,) obtained by

by her Intercessions. || See also several of those degrees of Supernatural Prayer, that are described by her in *Her Life*, attained by another Confessor of hers, one of those, by whose Command she writ it, after some four Months practice of this Holy Exercise ||. To whom, though she gives an account of her proceeding in Prayer, as to her Ghostly Father by his Profession, and Learning, yet she often bespeaks him also as her Scholler, in the matters of Spirit. To these I may add *Father Balthazar Alvarez*, who heard her Confessions for Three Years together in her greatest perplexities, and troubles : On whom, some Five Years after this, God was pleased to bestow the same high manner of Prayer, as formerly was, on Her ; || and he, studious to propagate it, and giving instructions thereof to others under his charge was complained of by some mis-understanding Persons (in a time when a Sect of the *Illuminati* had given much scandal in Spain) ; and upon this examined concerning it by his Superiors ; and so gave an account thereof in Writing ||, much what like to that of this Saint, and much to their satisfaction; who approved his Spirit, and admired his Sanctity. Her Brother also, *Laurence de Cepeda*, after his return from the West-Indies, addicting himself much to this holy Exercise, and punctually following her directions, who had also (though against her will) made a Vow of Obedience to do whatever she advised him, attained the same Prayer of Repose, or *Quiet*, and received from God many extraordinary favours, as appears by her Letters to Him ||. See likewise, to what an high perfection herein, *Father John of the Cross*, her Disciple, and one of the two first Founders of the *Discalced Carmelites*, arrived, in his Excellent works written concerning *Mystical Theology*.

Many also there were of her Spiritual Daughters in the Monasteries she founded, that, by these her Directions, arrived to several Degrees of Prayer Supernatural ; though I do not say many, that entred into all those higher Mansions, whereinto it pleased the Divine Bounty to admit Her. Of these Graces done her Daughters, see what she saith in the Book of her Foundations ||. The favours which our Lord doth in these Monasteries are so great, that they astonish me : for, He conducts them all by Meditation ; and some attain to perfect Contemplation ; others are advanced so far, as to arrive to Ecstasies, and Raps ; to others our Lord doth Favours of another kind, bestowing on them likewise Revelations, and Visions, such as, it is manifestly discerned, do proceed from God. There is never a one of these Monasteries at this day, wherein are not found either One, or Two, or

See his Life.
chap. 13.

Ibid. and
chap. 41.

S.Teres.Let.
ters 32-33-34.

Foundat.
c. 9. pag. 83.

(e 3) Three.

Three, such. ¶ And see what she saith to the same purpose, in *Concepts of the Love of God*, c. 6: Of this be, that would further inform himself, may view the particular Narrations, that are extant, of the Lives of many of them; or the Convictions of them in *Docor Carmeli Part 2 and 3*. And the great advancement that appears to have been frequently made by this unlearned Sex in this, far the noblest of all Sciences, still more confirms; That *Mystical Theology* is not so well learnt in the School of the *Understanding*, as of the *Affections*, in which that Sex is thought no way inferior to men; nor had our *Lord* a greater Proficient in this School of *Love*, than *S. Mary Magdalene*. And therefore it ought to be no wonder if great Doctors have not blushed to learn this Science from their Experience. This, of the many others, who by the *Holy Mother's Lessons* became Great *Contemplatives*.

And, if many do not receive the same Rewards of *Prayer* from God, as these, and others, have done; perhaps, for some, or the most, this happeneth, because they are less assiduous, and diligent. 1. In the Work of *Prayer*; the most necessary Condition to the perfection of which is the *Continuation* of it, as every one is best skilled in that which he most practiseth: and the *H. Mother observes*; ¶ that such *Supernatural Prayer*, especially in the beginnings, is not had but after long *Mental Prayer*. 2. Or defective in *Mortification*: This, and *Prayer* being the two chief Incentives of the *Love of God*. 3. Or less watchful, and not so circumspectly standing upon their guard, as to avoiding all *occasions of sin*, and the committing any small one, wittingly, and with preadverency. For our advancement in *Prayer* requires, though no exquisit *Meditations*, yet a persevering attendance and sighing after, God; and, like a *Lover*, never letting him go out of our thoughts; requires a great disrellish and disengagement as to all *secular Friendships*, and affaires; and an acceptable *purity* of *Conscience*; which is the Souls beauty, inviting him to love us [*Mundi Corde Deum Videbunt*]. Now, though the practice of *Prayer* be not so difficult, Yet the courage and Valour, effectually to set upon it, is not so usual: i. e. to take the *Soul* out of its own *Country* as it were, and from all its acquaintance, persons, or things, of this world, [*Oblivisci populum suum & dominum parvum*]; and lift it up to Heaven, or, rather, thus it up within it self, there, all alone, to entertain and converse with our *Lord*, and yield up it self, and all other things, disinterested, wholly to his Will and disposal. *Vobis regnante Caelum;* And, *Qui habentur ad ipsam*: And, *Qui seminas in Bencedictionibus, de Bene-*

¶ Her Life.
chap. 18.

Mat. 5. 8.

Psal. 44. II.

Benedictionibus & metet. Though all the Labour and Difficulty is, chiefly, in the beginning; and as their Industry, is yet this never without *Grace*, maintains the work at the first. So Grace, (more abundantly conferred), doth this work in them afterward, as it were without their care, (as the Apostle: *Nonego Vivo, sed in me Christus*:) and they serve God at his charges, and with their own repose. Gal. 2. 20.

Mean-while: These her excellent *Directions*, and *Precepts*, rendred these Books, then going abroad in *Manuscript*, most acceptable, and beneficial to all sorts of *Readers*; whether those already *Spiritual*, and *Holy*; or those as yet involved in great *Imperfections*, and *Sins*; the *one* encouraged to pursue further the happy Way they were entred into, by seeing here much higher *Ascents* in *Prayer*, than those, they had already attained, and by being freed from many former causeless, fears, and scandals: the *other*, allured to the practice of *Virtue*, and *Prayer*, by the great *endeavours*, and *favours*, they see our Lord, even in this *Life*, to bestow on those, who by this holy Practice will make friendship with Him, such as far surpases those of this *World*, that had formerly enticed them away from him. Next this experience of so *Universal* a *Benefit*, wrought by them, caused these Books, first, to be Printed and published in *Spain*, though formerly intended only to pass in *Manuscript* for the use of the *Mysteries* of her own *Order*; as appears in the Description of *Hierom Gratian* here annexed: Again, for the benefit of more Souls, to be translated into most *Modern Languages*. And this is the Third attempt, to make also our own *Nation* happy in the enjoyment of them; purged from many former mistakes in the sense, and rendred in many places much more coherent, and perspicuous; excepting only those *obscurities*, which the *Errata* of the *Press* may have caused; which are very numerous, by reason of the little attendance that could be allowed to it: The principal of them are collected, and put at the End of the Book, which the Reader is desired to consult, where he perceives any such incongruity in the sense, as his own conjecture cannot presently rectifie.

If what here hath been said may invite the *Reader* to look into, and taste this *Presents* offered him, I dare leave the rest to his *Experience*; and do little doubt, but that, by the Internal co-operation of that *Holy Spirit*, by whose special *Afflition* these *Works* seem to have been composed, he will soon perceive in himself the great virtue of them, for drawing *Souls* to a more zealous, and resigned,

Loving,

Loving, and Serving of that *Celestial Majesty*, which is pleased to treat with so much kindness, and familiarity, those, who here sincerely seek after him, and to reward them with so great *Consolations*, and *Regale's* even in this *present life*, as do make it, and all things in it, distastful, and loathsome unto them, except the sole *enjoyment* of Him; or the *doing*, or *suffering*, somthing for Him. Blessed be He, for his infinite mercies, and love to us, for ever. Amen.

An

An Account of Saint Teresa's Works, given by the Bishop of Tarassonne, sometimes her Confessor, in his 18th Chapter of the Third Book of the Life of the Holy Mother; declaring the Occasion of her writing them, and the great Applause, and Benefit, with which the World hath since entertained them.

The Holy Mother Teresa (saith he) (besides many loose Papers, wherein are found things of much profit, and Spirit, some of which the Father Doctor Ribera with great diligence and fidelity hath collected in his History of her Life) writ Five Books: none upon her own will, and for her pleasure; but all out of Obedience to her Confessors, whom she obeyed with the same exactness, as God himself. The First Book was a Discourse and Relation of her Life. And, because some ignorant persons, and unexperienced in the Spiritual Way, have scrupled at the Saint's writing her own Life, and in it so much of the Celestial Favours, and her own Vertues, not considering, that, She being so very good, and obliged also to say the Truth, how much soever she desired to discover only her faults, could not but manifest her Vertues, and being to recount the Relations and Favours, which our Lord did her, and the Effects, they caused in her Soul, could not omit the writing somewhat of the rare perfections, and Graces, that lodged in it: To these I say; That the Holy Mother did all this on meer necessity and constraint: For, She, being truly humble, and prudent, proceeded (as in the First Book we have expressed more at large), in such an excess of favours received from God, with a suspicion and fear of being deluded by the Devil, which never let her rest. And this our Lord certainly so ordained, that her Spirit might be more known in the World, and might pass through a stricter scrutiny, and find a greater approbation. On the other side likewise her Confessors (especially after that for some years she began to have these things) though they were learned, and wise persons, and saw in the Mother all the Marks, that the Spirit of God carries along with it; Yet, these Favours being so rare, and so extraordinary, did not rely on their own opinion, and judgment; but, knowing that Father Doctor Avila, a man of much Spirit, Experience, and Wisdome, for discerning of Spirits, was in Andaluzia, her Confessor, who was then Father Garcia de Toledo, and one of the Inquisitors, that then passed through

(f)

Avila,

Avilas advised her to make a Relation of her Life, in which she should give an account with all clarity, of whatsoever passed therein, and to send it to Andaluzia to this holy Person forementioned.

See here the End she had in writing her Life, without ever then imagining, that it should be seen by any other, save her Confessor, and the Party that was to examine it. Yet, the Holy Mother then thought it to be so secret, that in part she reduced it to the Sacrament of Penance, and so she therein declared, that she permitted him not to shew to any person, more than the first Chapters of her Life, in which she writ down her faults, and the vanities she had lived in : and desired his secrecy touching the Favours God did her. This was her design, but God's was quite different ; for, by this means he was pleased to bring to light those Treasures, he had deposited in that holy Soul : for presently as soon as the excellency of her Spirit came to be known, and the light, and clarity of her doctrine was perceived, and the great benefit it might do in the Church, her Life grew by little and little to be divulged, and, without her knowledge, many Copies while she yet lived were taken of it. Afterward her Confessors commanded her to add thereto the Foundation of S. Joseph at Avila : for, the Relation which she sent to Father Avila, was short, and she made it before this passed. When the Holy Mother was dead, presently this Book of her Life was Printed, having first been many years detained and examined by the Court of the Inquisition, all at the instance and request of the Holy Mother ; who, after she had communicated it to Father Domingo Bannez, her Confessor, by his direction, and means, delivered it to the Lords Inquisitors.

We see then, that the First Book the Holy Mother made, that of her Life, she writ, constrained, and forced by so many Obligations. This, as it appears by a Letter of the Holy Mothers, annexed at the End of the Book, was finished in the Month of June, 1562. Afterward, the very same Year, by command of her Confessor she divided it into Chapters ; for, before, it had no Distinction ; and added the Foundation of S. Joseph at Avila.

The Second Book was the Way of Perfection ; which she writ being Prioress of S. Joseph's at Avila, for her Nuns, by order of Father Domingo Bannez, who at that time was her Confessor ; This was done the same Year after she had finished the Book of her Life : and Don Teutonio de Verganza Arch-bishop of Ebora caused it to be Printed, whilst the Mother was yet living.

The Third Book was that of the Foundations of the other Monasteries, which she erected, beginning with that of Medina, and ending with

with that of Burgos, which was the last. She began it at Salamanca, in the Year, 1573. by the direction of Father Hierom de Ripalda, of the Society of Jesus, who there confessed her, having already erected seven Monasteries, and, after that, went on augmenting it, as she continued her founding.

The Fourth is entitled *The Interiour Castle, or The Mansions*; which she writ living at Toledo, by Order of her Confessor, Doctor Velasquez, who, as we have said, was afterward Bishop of Osma, and Arch-Bishop of Saint James's. During which time, she arrived to so high a Degree of Prayer, and went about so elevated in God, that, for ten, or twelve Days, she was not able to write a Letter; and thereby got a great weakness in her Head, as she specifies in the same Book. She began it on the Feast of the most Holy Trinity, in the Year 1577. at Toledo, and finished it at Avila, on S. Andrew's Eve, that same Year, almost five Years before she died. The Reader will find in this Book admirable Learning; and plainly discern with how great an Excellence and Majesty of Style, and clearnes of Examples, she conducts a Soul to the very Gates, into which she her self entred; raising her, from one degree to another, to her very Center, which is the Seventh Mansion, the Palace of the Celestial Spouse, and King of Glory Jesus Christ.

The Fifth Book which the Holy Mother composed, was upon the Canticles of Salomon: and this by order of some persons (as she saith her self) whom she was bound to obey. Of this there are some few leaves. For, as she writ it out of Obedience, so, upon the same ground, she tore, or burnt it; because her Confessor, without seeing it, was scandalized, that a Woman should write upon the Canticles, and commanded her to burn it; who needed no thing more to make her do it. Yet some part of this Work remained, which the Nuns had secretly begun to copy. It was indeed a signal proof of the great Obedience of the Saint; since without expecting other's opinions she burnt this Work, which would have been no less beneficial than the rest, which she left us in writing. And she had done so likewise with the Book of her Life, if Father Domingo Bannez, who, to try her Obedience, and submission, enjoyned her to burn it, had not in time recalled his Command; which, the Holy Woman, as if given by God, had speedily obeyed.

To the writing these Books, the Holy Mother was induced by precedent Revelations from our Lord, yet she was not content therewith; for she was guided in nothing by Revelation alone, except her Confessors concurred in enjoining the same.

Of the Book of her Life, she saith in the Proeme: I make this Relation,

tion, which my *Confessors* have enjoyned me; and, to my knowledg, our Lord himself desired long since, but I durst not undertake.

The Book of her Foundations, our Lord expressly commanded her to write; as she relates in the Additions to her Life. That of The Mansions she writ, our Lord furnishing her with Matter, the Designe, and Name to the Work.

In writing commonly, her Mind was so absorpt in God, that, though there was a great Noise in her Cell, it did not disturb her, or make her sensible thereof. She writ, being full of business, and cares for so many Houses governed by her; and going to the Quire as duly as the rest. She writ with great speed; it seems she had a Mine in her Brain, from whence issued words so well tempered, and fitted, to what she was to utter, that though she wrote so many leaves, she never staid to consider any of the things she was to write; for the Spirit dictated to her in such abundance, that, had she had many Hands, she could have employed them all, and have tired them, and yet not have wanted Matter.

Concerning this point, of not applying her self so think of what she was to write, she speaks in the End of her Life, in these words, I have ventured to put in order this my disordered Life, though I have bestowed thereon no more study, or time, than needed for the writing thereof; but have set down what passed concerning me, with all the plainness and truth, that I could. And in another place she saith: But how many things offer themselves in the very beginning to treat of this Way, even to one, that hath been so bad a Traveller therein, as I have? I would I had many hands to write, that some things might not be forgotten by reason of others. All this is the Holy Mother's; She saith also in her Life, that she writ with such ease, as one that had an Original before him, from which he copied somthing. || Whenever our Lord (saith she) gives a Spirit, things are easily and better expressed; and it seems to be as when one hath an Original before him, from which he is taking out a Copy; but, if the Spirit be wanting, this language can no more be explained, than if it were Arabick.

In the Originals, writ with her own hand, there is not found a Word cancelled, corrected, or mistaken; [The like is testified by Jerom Gratian, her intimate friend; "She writ (saith he)] without ever mending a leaf of what she penned, and writ very fast, even as publick Notaries use to do:] which, had it been in the copying a thing Printed, would have been remarkable; but, to be done at the first hand, and upon a Subject so sublime, and with so agreeable and ordinary a Stile, seems to me one of the greatest Miracles recorded of the Saint, and the greatest

[In his Trea-
tise 45. con-
cerning her
Books, chap. 5.]

testimony of that Light, and Wisdome, which the Holy Ghost infused into her. For, the Holy Woman being formerly very rude, and ignorant, as to the understanding, and explicating things Spiritual and Mys-
tical, and no way curious to learn them; the Wisdome of God that di-
rected her, became so much the more illustrious in her, as she of her
self was more unapt, and averse.

This may be sufficiently understood from what she writ of her self, in her Life, in these words ||. There were divers years, when I read many things, yet understood none of them; and a long time also, when, though God gave me ability to understand, yet I could not speak a word, whereby to make it be understood; for this hath cost me no small labour; but, when his Majesty is pleased to teach it, he doth it all in an instant, so that I am amazed. One thing I can say with truth; that, though I spake with many Spiritual Persons, who had a mind to make me understand what our Lord imparted to me, that so I might be able to declare things, it is certain, that my dulnes was so great, that it availed me neither little, nor much; or our Lord (as his Divine Majesty hath ever been my Master; be He blessed for all; since it is confusion enough for Me to be able to say thus much with truth) was pleased, that I should have none to thank, but Himself, for it; and that, without my desiring, or wishing it (for in this I was not a jot curious; wherein to be so, might have been a vertue; though I was so about other vanities) He would give me to understand it with all clarity in an instant, yea, and to be able to utter it in such sort, as they were amazed at it; and I my self more than my Confessors; because I better knew my own stupidity. This was not long since; and so I procure not to know what our Lord hath not taught me; if it be not a thing that concerns my Conscience.

In the fourteenth Chapter of her Life, she also saith: It is a very great advantage, when I write this, to be actually in Prayer: for I see plainly, it is not I, who say it; since I neither then order it with my understanding, nor know afterward, how I was able to declare it.

*And in the Thirty-ninth Chapter, she writes in this wise: Many of those things, which I write here, are not out of my own head, but this my Heavenly Master told me them. And, because in those things, wherein I say expressly, *This I understood; or, our Lord told me it;* I make a great scruple of either adding, or subtracting one only Syllable; hereupon, when I do not very exactly remember every thing, it passeth as spoken by my self; or because indeed some things also are so. I call nothing mine own, that is good; for I*

know, there is nothing in me so, save what, without my writing it, our Lord hath given me; but I call that *spoken by my self*, which was not imparted to my Understanding by *Revelation*.

When she writ the Book of her Life, being come to those Degrees of Prayer, which she there describes; it was a strange thing, how, as she went ascending from one Degree to another, our Lord put her at the same time actually into that kind of Prayer; and, together with the experience that she had, gave her a promptness, and felicity in expressing it, furnishing her with Comparisons very pertinent, the better to explicate it.

For confirmation of all that hath been said, both of the End, the Holy Mother proposed to her self in writing her Life; and of the Inability, she formerly found in her self; and of the Employments, wherein she was engaged at the time of her writing it; It will not be amiss here to insert some of her words well-beseeming her Spirit and Humility].

I relate (*faith she*) what hath occurred to me, as I am enjoined; and, if it be not well, let Him tear it, to whom I send it, as knowing better than I, what is ill. Whom I beseech for the love of our Lord, that whatever I have said hitherto concerning my wicked Life, and my Sins, may be published; and from this instant I give this leave to all my *Confessors*; (for, He is one of them, to whom this is directed): and, (if they please), to do it now, whilst I am living; to the end I may no longer deceive the World, which perhaps thinks there is some good in me; and really, really, I speak it with truth, according to what I at present understand of my self, it will be a great consolation to me. But, as for that which I say hereafter, I give no such liberty; nor would I have them, if they shew it to any, reveal the Person concerned in it, or who writ it; for, therefore I neither name *My Self*, nor any else; but have done the best I could, to write it so, as not to be known, and this I request for the love of God. There are now persons so learned, and grave, as to authorize any thing which is good, if our Lord will give me the grace to say it; and, if such it be, it must be *His*, and not Mine; since I want learning, and good life, nor am I instructed by the learned, or any else; for they only, who command me to write it, know, that I writ it; and at present they are not here; and I write it as it were by stealth, and with trouble; because I am hindred from Spinning; and live in a poor House, clogged with many employments; had our Lord given me better parts, and Memory, I could thereby have made use of what I had heard, and read; but mine are very mean; So that, if I say any thing that is good, our Lord will have it so for some good end; whatever is ill

ill said will be mine, and that your Reverence may cancel. Both for the one, and the other, there accrues no benefit by telling my name. During ones life, it is evident, the good done by any is not to be mentioned; and, after death, there is no reason for it, except the making this good to lose all its authority, and credit, for being spoken of so base, and so wicked a Person. ————— And, because I conceive you will do this, which I beg of you even for the love of our Lord, as likewise of those others, that are to see it, I write with freedome; otherwise, I should do it with great scruple; save in mentioning my Sins; for, herein, I have none at all; as to other things it is sufficient to make me hang the wing, that I am a Woman; how much more then, in being a Woman, and Wicked? And therefore, whatsoever is more than a meer Relation of the course of my Life, your Reverence is to keep to your self (since you have so exceedingly pressed me to the writing some Narrative of the Favours, which God bestows on me in *Prayer*); if it be conformable to the Truths of our Holy Catholick Faith; if not, burn it presently; for to this I submit; and I will relate what passed in me, to the end that, if it be conformable hereto, it may some way profit your Reverence; if not, you may undeceive my Soul, that so the Devil may get nothing by that, whereby I conceive my self to gain; for our Lord knows, as I shall shew afterward, that I have ever endeavoured to seek out some one that might give me light, &c. *Thus the Holy Mother in the Tenth Chapter of her Life: And it may serve for her own Preface to her Works. And thus much the Bishop of Tarassonne concerning her Books; the great Humility of Spirit wherewith they were written, and great Approbation and applause, wherewith received, then, in the World.*

The Apology of Father Hierome Gratian, the Holy Mothers Chief Assistant, for publishing her Works which treating of such high, extraordinary, Spiritual, and Supernatural Matters: In his Treatise concerning the Books of the Holy Mother Teresa de Jesu. Where he saith.

To remove perfectly all scruple from such as shall read these Books of the Holy Mother Teresa de Jesu; it was the Providence of God, that this his Servant was very humble, very timorous, and dissident of Her Self, and her own Parts, beyond all that I have known. He permitted likewise, that she should have these Impressions, and extraordinary matters of Spirit, whereof she treats in these Books; and should write them in a time, when Impostures were frequent in Spain, among deluded Women; insomuch as no Woman, discoursing on any such subject, could avoid being persecuted, and upbraided with the ill Ends of those, objected to her, who by the dreadful Tribunal of the Inquisition had been sentenced and condemned. Besides, it further pleased his Divine Majesty, that in her beginnings she confessed to Confessors, the most timorous and wary of believing things Supernatural, that I ever knew. Hence it came, that neither the Holy Mother, nor her Confessors, were secure concerning matters of her Spirit; but went seeking out as many Learned Persons as they could, that they might examine it, with a fear to be, and a desire not to be, deceived. And so she first sought out men eminent in Prayer, and Spirit, to whom she communicated this Doctrine. Among others was the Blessed Father Fr. Peter of Alcantara, Founder of the Discalced Franciscans in Spain; and Father Daza, and many others, Spiritual Persons. And, not satisfied with this (conceiving that, for the understanding these things there needed great Learning, and likewise great Integrity, and Spirit) she sought out the gravest Persons of the Society of Jesus, to whom she related part of her whole manner of proceeding; and, among others, one was the Blessed Francis Borgia, afterward General of the Society; Father Araoz, Commissary of the same Society; Father Egidius Gonzalez, Provincial, one of the four eminentest for the affairs of his Order; Father Baltasar Alvarez, Rector of Salamanca, afterward Provincial, and her Confessor six Tears;

Tears; Father John Suarez, Provincial of Castile; Father Santander Rector of Segovia; Father Ripalda, Rector of Salamanca; and Father Roderigo Alvarez, who, in Segovia, examined all Spiritual Cases. These Fathers were in their times of the most renowned and eminent for Spirit, and Learning, of the Society of Jesus, in all Spain; and she with great diligence procured, when she understood any one of them of great fame, near the places where she lived, to speak with him, and give him an account of her Prayer, and manner of proceeding.

She enquired out Religious Persons of S. Dominic's Order, informing her self who were the eminentest for Learning, those especially, whom she knew were displeased at the novelty of the Spirit, which she was reported to have. So, she imparted her Soul, and her whole Interior to the Fathers, Fr. Philip de Meneses, Rector of the Colledg of S. Gregory in Valladolid; to Father Lunar, Prior of S. Thomas's in Avila; to Father Fr. Diego Suarez, who was likewise Rector of the Colledg at Valladolid; to Father Chaves, Confessor to the King; to Father Salinas, Provincial of his Order; to Father Fr. Domingo Bannez, First Reader of Divinity, at Salamanca; and to Father, Fr. Bartholomew de Medina, likewise First Reader of Divinity in the same University; with whom one thing befell her worthy of remark; which was, that she, understanding that this Father much disliked her as to these things, sent for him; and, placed at his feet, earnestly intreated him for Gods sake to examine with all rigour by his skills, and learning, what she should acquaint him with. She made a General Confession to him, and gave him an account of her Spirit; who, having heard her, and very well studied these Cases, approved all this doctrine; and for a long time was her Confessor; Yet, not content with this, she also imparted her condition to others, S. culars, Doctors of Divinity, very great Scholars; as to Doctor Velasquez, who was Bishop of Olma; to Doctor Castro, Canon of Toledo, afterward Bishop of Lugo, and of Segovia; and to Doctor Manso, Bishop of Calahorra. And, being still dissatisfied with the Examination, and approbation of Grave, Learned, and Spiritual Persons (conceiving it to be a business belonging to the Inquisition) She procured the Consultors of the Inquisition to examine, and observe her manner of proceeding. And so she sought out Father Doctor Paul Hernandez, of the Society of Jesus; and Father Fr. Vicenzo Varron of the Order of S. Dominic, both Consultors of the Inquisition. These two examined her at their best leisure, and with diligence; and approved her Spirit, and Doctrine. Yet notwithstanding she, desiring to be fully satisfied in this Case, went to the Inquisitor Don Francisco Soto de Salazar,

lazar, afterward Bishop of Salamanca, telling him : Sir, I have some ways of proceeding in Spirit extraordinary ; as Extasies, Raptis, and Revelations, and I would not be deluded, or cosened by the Devil, nor admit any thing that is not very secure : I therefore put my self into the hands of the *Holy Office*, to examine me, and consider my way of proceeding, submitting my self in every thing to what they shall command me. *The Inquisitor answered her* ; Madam, The *Inquisition* meddles not with the Examining of Spirits, or ways of proceeding in *Prayer*, in Persons that exercise it, but with the Punishing of *Hereticks*. You may write all these things that pass in your Interiour with all simplicity, and truth, and send them to *Father Avila*, who is a Person of much Spirit and Learning, and well experienced in these matters of *Prayer* ; and in the Answer he gives you, you may acquiesce, having no cause of further fear. Upon this command of the *Inquisitor*, and of other her Confessors, that had enjoyned her the same, and upon the requestis of many of her Friends, she writ the full Relation of her Life, being the same which is had in her Books, and sent it first to *Father Francis Salsedo*, her Confessor, and then after to *Father Avila*, Author of the Book entitled *Audi Filia*. *Father Avila*, after he had read it, return'd a Letter (the Original whereof is in my power) in which he approves, and explains the Doctrine contained in it ; which, because I conceive it pertinent, and that it declares matters concerning this subject of the Spirit, I will here set down verbatim a Copy of it, as follows.

A Letter of Father Avila to Mother Teresa de Jesu ; giving light to many things Concerning the Spirit.

The Grace, and Peace of JESUS, be ever with you.

When I received the Book, sent to me, it gave me occasion to think, not so much that I was a competent Judge of the matters therein, as that I, through the mercy of our Lord might some way benefit my self by its Doctrine ; and I thank Christ, that having seen it, though I am in this latter regard, much comforted, without meddling with the other ; yet the respect I owe to the busines, and to the

the Person recommending it to me, seems not to permit that I should forbear to say somthing of my opinion of it, at least in general.

The Book, so as it is, || ought not to pass through the hands of many, because the expressions in it need correcting in some places, and in others explaining; and there are other things, that to your Spirit may be beneficial, and yet would not prove so to others, that should follow them; because particular cases whereby God conducts some, suit not with others; and these, or the greatest part of them, are here marked out by me, to put in order, and prepare them, when I shall be able; and shall find an occasion to send them to You hereafter. At the present, if you saw my infirmities, and other necessary employments, I believe, they would move you rather to compassionate, than blame me, as negligent.

It was the first Copy of her Life that was perused by P. Avila. See Her 15th Letters

The Doctrine concerning *Prayer* is for the most part good, and you may very well acquiesce in it, and follow it; and in the *Kapis* I find the Signes, which those have that are true. The Manner of God's teaching a Soul without the Imagination, and without Interior Words, is safe; and I find nothing to scruple at; and S. *Augustine* speaks very well of it.

The *Interior Speeches* have deceived many in our days, and the *External* are less secure; the perceiving, that they are not of ones own Spirit, is an easie matter; the discerning, whether they be from a good, or bad Spirit, is harder. There are divers Rules given for knowing, whether they are from God; and one is, if that they are spoken in a time of need, or for some great benefit; for example, to comfort one tempted, or despairing; or as an advertisement of some danger. Since, as a good Man speaks not words that are not well weighed, so much less God; and, this being considered, and that the Words are consonant to Divine Scripture, and the Doctrine of the Church, It seems to me, that those in the Book are from God.

Those *Visions* that are Imaginary, or Corporal, are those that are more doubtful; and in no wise ought to be desired, but avoided, as much as is possible; (though not by making signes of Contempt, unles when it is certainly known to be an evil Spirit; and indeed it caused a horror in me to see those that were made in this case; and it put me to great pain)... Persons ought to beseech our Lord not to conduct them by the way of seeing; but that the happy sight of Him, and of his Saints be reserved for Heaven; and that here He would conduct them in the plain, beaten, Road, as he guides his Faithful; and by other good means they ought to endeavour the shunning these things.

(g 2) But,

But, if, doing all this, the Visions continue, and the Soul reaps profit thereby, and their seeing induceth not Vanity, but greater Humility, and that which is spoken [by such persons seen] is the Doctrine of the Church, and that it continues to them a long time, and with a certain inward satisfaction (which is better enjoyed than expressed) there is no cause for avoiding these; though herein none ought to rely on his own judgment, but forthwith communicate it to one, that may give him light. And this is the Universal Remedy, that must be used in all these things; and to hope in God, who, if there be Humility to submit to the opinion of another, will not suffer a Soul to be deceived, that desires to be secure.

And none is to fear, or instantly to blame these things, because the Person, he sees them conferred upon, is not perfect; since it is no new thing to the goodness of our Lord, of bad, to make Righteous men; and even out of hainous sins, to extract great blessings, by giving them very delicious relishes of himself, as I my self have seen. Who is he, that shall set limits to the bounty of our Lord? Especially since these are not given for Merit, or for one's being stronger, nay, are given to some for their being weaker; and, as they make one not more holy, so are not always given to persons more holy.

John 4. 18.

Neither have they reason, who credit not these things, because they are very high; as thinking it incredible, that the Infinite Majesty should abase himself to such an amorous communication with his Creature. It is written, that *God is Love*; and, if *Love*, a Love infinite, and a Goodness infinite; now it is no wonder, for such Love and Goodness, to shew such Excesses of Love, at which they are troubled, that know it not; and, though many know it by Faith, yet the particular experience of the affectionate, and more than affectionate, converse of God with whom he pleases (if not hindred) cannot be known throughly, till this Communication be attained. Whereupon I have seen many scandalized, at beholding the great acts of the Love of God toward his Creatures; and, themselves being very far from the like, they never imagine, that God doth to others, what he doth not to them; whereas it is reason, that, because it is a work of Love, and Love, that raises admiration; it should be taken for a Mark, that it is from God; since he is wonderful in his works, and much more in those of his Mercy; now they from this very ground take an occasion of mis-belief, which should rather cause beliefe, such circumstances concurring, as evidence that it is a good thing.

Me-thinks, by that which appears in the Book, you have reflected

fisted these things even more than was meet ; me-thinks, they have benefited your Soul, and especially have made you to know your own misery, and defects, and to amend them ; they have continued a long time ; and always with spiritual profit ; they incite you to the Loving of God, and despising your self, and the doing Penance : I do not see why I should blame them ; I incline more to think them good, upon condition, that there be ever caution used not to rely wholly thereon, if it be a thing unusual, or bid, that somthing singular be done, and not very plain, and easie. In all these, and the like cases one must ever suspend Belief, and presently ask Counsel. Likewise let it be noted, that, though these things be from God, yet others use to be intermingled by the Enemy, and therefore one must always be suspiciois. Also, till it be known, that they are from God, one ought not to trust much to them ; since holiness consists only in the having an humble Love of God, and our Neighbour ; and these other things (though good) one must value less, and place their whole study in the getting true Humility, and the Love of our Lord.

It is likewise expedient not to adore these *Visions*, but only *Jesus Christ* in Heaven, and not that which in my Imagination is represented to me, but [meerly] as an Image, by this means to conduct me to that, which is represented. I say also, that the things [mentioned] in this Book befall some Persons (even in our days) and that with much assurance that they are from God, whose hand is not shortened, that it cannot do now that, which in former times ; and in weak instruments too, so He may be glorified.

Go on in your way, but ever with a suspicion of Theeves, and an enquiry after the right way : and I thank our Lord, who hath given you his holy Love, the Knowledg of your Self, and a Love of Penance, and the Croſs ; for these other things, do not much heed them, though neither must you contemn them, since there are signs, that very many of them are from God ; and those that are not ſuch, by asking advice, can do you no hurt. I cannot believe, that I have writ this by my own strength ; for, I have none : I suppose, your Prayer hath effected it. I request you for the Love of *Jesus Christ* our Lord, to undertake the charge of praying to him for me ; He knows, I desire it upon urgent necessity ; this, I conceive, may ſuffice, to move your Reverence to do what I intreat You ; and I beg your leave to conclude this at present, being obliged to write You another :

(g 3.)

ther. Jesus be glorified by all, and in all. Amen. From Montiglia. Septemb. 12. 1568. Your Reverence's Servant in Christ,

John d'Avila.

This is the Letter of Father Avila, whose Life Father Fr. Lewis of Granada wrote, who, in his time, was one of the most eminent for Spirit in all Spain.

THe Holy Mother likewise communicated her Spirit to Father Fr. Lewis Bertran, of the Order of S. Dominic, who lived at Valentia, and sent him this Relation; He approved her Spirit, as may be seen in a Letter, annexed to the Book of the Life of the same Blessed Father Lewis Bertran. With this Letter, and that of Doctor Avila, the Holy Mother was calmed for the present; and left off her going about so solicitous (as she was wont) to seek some to examine her Doctrine; and Spirit. But God, who would have Her examined yet more severely, ordained, that a Principal Lady in Spain, having in her Custody the Book which she her self had written with her own hand, on an opportunity sent it to the Inquisition, saying that Visions, Revelations, and dangerous Doctrines were contained in that Book; which their Lordships might view, and examine. It continued in the Inquisition above Ten Years, in which time (among many others it was examined by Father Fr. Hernando del Castello, Author of the History of S. Dominic. At the end of these Years it fell out, that the Holy Mother, being in my company at Toledo (for I was at that time her Provincial) desired leave of Cardinal Chirurga, Arch-bishop of Toledo, President of the General Inquisition, to found a Monastery for Nuns in his Arch-bishoprick; we being far from thinking of the Book. The Cardinal used these words to her: I am very glad of [the occasion of] knowing you; for I wished for it; and you shall have a Chaplaine in my stead; that shall serve, and assist you in all that shall offer it self to him; for I let (you understand, that some years since there was pre-

presented to the Inquisition a Book of Yours, and that Doctrine was examined with much rigour, I have read it over; it is a Doctrine very safe, and true, and very profitable: You may send to receive it, when you please, and I give you leave to demand it; and intreat You always to recommend me to God. At these words spoken by a Person, who (besides his Office, and Dignity) was one of the greatest, most rigid, and sincere, that have been in Spain, we rejoiced exceedingly; and presently the Holy Mother would have had us put in a Memorial to the Inquisition, to give us the Book. I told her, that, since we understood by the General Inquisitor's own mouth, that it was approved, it would be easier for me to go (as I did) straight to the Duke of Alva, Don Fernando de Toledo, who had a Copy of the Book (which, by leave from the Inquisition, he had read) and desire it of him. The Duke gave me it, and I made some Copies of it be transcribed, that they might be extant in our Monasteries of Friars, and Nuns: One of these Copies light into the hands of the Empress D. Maria, who desired it might be Printed; and by command of the Council Royal, it was committed to Father Lewis de Leon, Chief Reader of the Holy Scripture in Salamanca; and the Original was taken out of the Inquisition, written with the Holy Mother's own hand, that so the Edition afterward might be more corrected. After this his Majesty King Philip the Second took this Original, together with that of the Way of Perfection, and of the Mansions, and, causing them to be bound up very well, commanded, they should be put in his own Library at S. Laurence's in the Escorial, where at present they are.

Of this Edition Printed in Spain, Doctor Barnabas de Marmol carried one into Italy, together with the Constitutions of the Nuns, desiring our most Holy Father Sixtus Quintus, that he would be pleased to confirm the Constitutions. His Holiness committed the reversal thereof to Cardinal S. Severine, who was very glad to see the Book; and it much pleased many other Prelates, and Persons of Quality, and Spiritual, and Devout men, in Italy; and, among the rest, the Bishop of Cavaillon, who Translated it out of Spanish into Italian. And his Holiness, after the Information of Cardinal S. Severine, granted his Breve, wherein he confirmed the Constitutions; and, among other things, commends the Mother Teresa, and her Doctrine, and Instructions.

All the time the Holy Mother lived, it was never her meaning (nor yet mine), that these Books should be Printed, and come so publickly abroad, into the hands of all that had a mind to read them; but go about in Manuscripts through our own Covents, that they might prove beneficial

to the Friars and Nuns; and, at the most, might be read by grave persons, and well skilled in Prayer.

But, after I had seen by experience the good, that this Doctrine had done among all sorts of persons, I changed my opinion; for I know, that many, very obstinate Sinners, have been converted by reading these Spiritual Doctrines; and by seeing the eminent carelessness and favours, which, even in this life, our Lord bestows on such as love him with all their heart, besides the Bliss reserved for them in Heaven. Many Persons, that, living well, have contented themselves with not sinning, without desiring to put themselves in the way of Perfection of the Spirit, and Mental Prayers, by reading this Doctrine have been animated, and resolv'd to apply themselves to the Spirit, and by this course have ascend-ed to a higher degree of Virtues and Merit.

Some there are, who, before very tepid in Prayer, by reading these Books are become fervent, and their Spirit elevated to very high Contemplation, disabused from those molestations, that used to hinder the Soul from going on toward its desired Perfection. Those, that many years since have used, and followed the way of Prayer, and thereby have gained great benefits from the light discovered by that high degree [of Prayer] whereto their Spirit hath arrived, have been delivered and rescued from many doubts, which are not well understood, unless explained by the mouth of one, who hath had experience therein.

To this may be added, that these Books teach no other artificial ways for ascending to eminent Prayer, and high Contemplation, save only Purity, Humility, the Love of God, and Perseverance in Prayer; and many places in them affirm, and most peremptorily maintain, that there is no great value to be set on these extraordinary Impressions, or Supernatural things: and, in case, that any Soul seeks, or desires, or procures them, they conceal themselves, and flee away; or, if they come, are not true ones, nor safe. Therefore these Books are far from causing Illusions, and impostures; nay, I know not what Books can be found, that conduce more to the avoiding them.



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THe having of vertuous Parents, and such as live in the fear of God, together with those favours which I received from his Divine Majesty, had been able to have made me good, if I had not been so very wicked. My *Father* was delighted in reading good Books; and used to have them in Spanish, that so his Children might also read them. This consideration, together with the care which my *Mother* had to make us say our Prayers, and to put us into a way of devotion to our Blessed *Lady*, and some other Saints began to awake and stir me up when I was (to the best of my remembrance) about six or seven years old. It assilited me also toward this good end, to find that there was no means to win the favour of my Parents, but by the way of Vertue. My *Father* was a man of much charity towards poor people, and compassion towards the sick; and especially so much toward his Servants, that he could never resolve to keep any slaves for the tendernes which he had towards them. And there being once a slave in his house, who belonged to a Brother of his, he caused her to be treated and fed as if she had been one of his own Children; and said, that in compassion he could not well endure to see her, unless she might be made free. He was a man of much truth; nor did ever any hear him swear or detract; exceedingly honest and chaste. My *Mother* also was enriched with many Vertues; and she passed through this lite of hers with grievous sickness: Her chastity and purity very great, and though she had an abundance of Beauty, yet was it never heard that she gave occasion for the world to conceive that she made any account of it at all. For, whereas she died when she was but three

and thirty years old, her attire was such, as suited to persons much more aged. She was of a most sweet disposition, and much understanding. The afflictions which she sustained in this life were great; and her death very Christian.

We were three *Sisters*, and nine *Brothers*; and all through the goodness of God were like our Parents in being vertuous, except my self; though yet I was the most beloved by my *Father*; and truly, till I began to offend God, he might seem to have had some reason. For it goes to my very heart, to remember those good inclinations which our Lord had given me; & the little benefit I made of them. My *Brothers* also were such, as in nothing dis-afflicted me from serving God. One of them was almost of my years, and I loved him best of them all; though yet I loved them all very much, as they also did me. But we two joyned much together in reading the *Lives of Saints*; and when I saw the Martyrdomes, through which, some of them had passed for the love of our Lord, me thought they had bought Heaven (where they were to see and enjoy his Divine Majesty) very cheap: And my self also desired much to dye so; not for the love which I found my self to bear him; but rather, that I might come by so compendious a way to enjoy those great felicities which I had read to be imparted in Heaven. I associated my self therefore to this *Brother* of mine, to consider what means there might be for our obtaining this end. We resolved that we would go into the Country of the *Moores*, begging for the Love of God, that so we might be beheaded there. And it seemed that our Lord gave us courage enough in that tender age of ours, if we could have found any means to set it on foot; but our having of Parents, seemed to be the greatest hindrance.

We found our selves much amazed to perceive in those things which we read, that both the Pain and Glory of the next life, was to last for ever; and we chanced to speak often of this; and we took pleasure in repeating these words many times; *For ever, for ever, for ever*; and by continuing to pronounce them long and often, our Lord was pleased to imprint the way of Truth upon my heart, in that very infancy of mine. When I saw it was impossible for me to go where they might put me to death for the love of our Lord, my *Brother* and I projected how to become Hermits at home; and so in a certain Garden, which belonged to the house, we procured to make Hermitages for us, the best we could: pileing up little stones for that purpose, which would instantly be falling down again; and so we met with no means to put our good desires in execution. But, in the mean time I am not without some feeling of devotion,

votion, to consider how soon it pleased God to give me this kind of tenderness towards him; which afterwards I lost through my own fault. I gave Almes as well as I could, though it were but little. I procured to be much alone for the better doing my devotions, which were many; and especially that of the *Rosary*, to which my *Mother* was much affected, and she endeavoured also to make us so. I took particular contentment, whilst I was playing with other Children, like my self, to frame certain little things like *Monasteries*, as if we had been Religious women; and me thought I desired to be one; though not this so much as I did those other things whereof I spake.

I remember, that when my *Mother* dyed, she left me a little less than twelve years old; and as soon as I began to understand how great a loss I had sustained by losing her, I was very much afflicted; and so I went before an Image of our Blessed *Lady*, and besought her with many tears that she would vouchsafe to be my *Mother*. And though I performed this little action but in a plain and simple manner, yet me-thinks I may well conceive that it hath served me to very good purpose; for I have most evidently found the favour of this Sovereign Virgin, concerning all things wherein I have recommended my self to her care; and in fine, she hath received me to her Service.

It afflicts me now to see, and consider, how poor those impediments were which kept me from remaining entire and constant in those good desires which I began to have. O my Lord, since it seems thou wilt vouchsafe to save me (and I beseech thy Divine Majesty, that it may be so) and to shew me so great favours as thou haft done me; might it not have pleased thee (not for my interest, but for the reverence due to thy self) to take order that this house of my heart, wherein thou shouldest for ever remain, might have been no more defiled? It grieves me O Lord, to say thus much, because I know the fault thereof was wholly mine; for, as for thee, I find clearly enough, that there wanted nothing at all on thy part to secure me for being totally thine, even from that tender age of mine. And if I would seek some colour to complain of my Parents, with as little reason also, can I do that; since I could never discover any thing in them, but all good, and care of my good. Afterward, when passing on from that tender age, I began to understand the gifts of Nature, which our Lord had bestowed upon me (which as they said were great) in stead of giving him thanks for the same, I began to make use of them all towards the offence of his Divine Majesty; as I shall now declare.

C H A P. II.

Which shews how she proceeded in losing these Virtues, and how very much it imports, to converse, in childhood, with Virtuous Persons.

I Believe, that a certaine thing , whereof I will now give account , began to do me a great deal of hurt. I consider somtimes , how ill those Parents do, who procure not , that their Children should be ever seeing examples of Vertue, in all kinds, from them. For , though my Mother were very eminent that way, (as I have said already) yet I took not so much of that good to my self , when I came to the use of Reason, nor almost any thing at all ; and , on the other side , whatsoever there was of imperfect, and ill, it did hurt me much. She was affected to books of *Chevalry* ; but took not so much hurt , by that entertainment , as I did ; for she omitted not that work , about which she was ; but only disengaged us from other things, that we might read them to her. And perhaps she did it the rather , that she might so, less think on the great afflictions, which she felt; and employ also her Children in such sort, as to divert them from the doing of worse things. My Father was so much troubled at this, that particular care was had, that he might not know it. I, in the mean time, remained with the custom of reading these Books ; and that little fault of mine, which discerned therein , began to cool my desires ; and was the reason, why I also grew to faile in greater things ; and I made my self believe, that it was not very ill done ; though yet I spent many hours , both of the day and night , in so vaine an exercise , though it was still concealed from my Father. And I was possessed herewith , in such extremity , that if perhaps I could not get some new book , me thought I was not satisfied.

I began to make my self fine ; and to desire to grow acceptable in seeming handsome ; and I took much care of my hands, and of my hair, and to get choice perfumes ; together with all those vanities , which it was possible for me to procure ; which were enow ; in regard , that I was very curious in this kind. I had only, no ill intention ; nor desired I, upon any terms, that any one should offend God, by occasion of me ; but I continued in a great curiosity of overmuch neatness , and some things which I conceived to be no sin at all for many years ; though I find now, how very ill they were.

Now.

Now I had certain Cosin-germans, who frequented my Fathers house in familiar manner ; no others, having any such liberty ; For , my Father was very wary, and reserved, in this kind ; but I would to God he had also been so, in respect of my Cosins ; because now, I discerne the danger, that it is in an age , wherein we are to begin to plant Vertues in the soul, to treat with persons, who know not, in true account, how great the Vanity of the world is ; but rather are inclined to awake and stir others up, to cast themselves also into the same danger. These Cosins of mine, were much about mine own age ; or rather a little elder than I. We were usually together ; and they carried great affection to me, and in all things, which gave them contentment, I was willing to uphold discourse ; and gave ear to the successes of their loves, & such other foollies, no way good. Yea , and which is worse , thus my soul grew acquainted with that, which was the cause of all the ensuing ill. If I were worthy to advise Parents, I would wish them to take great heed, what kind of persons they admitted to converse with their Children ; for , much harme may grow from thence ; since the natural condition of Man-kind will never ascend so easily towards good, as decline towards ill ; at least, it happened so to me. I had a Sister , much elder than my self , of whose purity and goodnes (whereof she had great store) I took no part; but I failed not to take all-hurt from a certain other kins-woman of mine, who had also familiar access to our house. Now she was of so light and giddy a conversation , that my Mother had used great diligence to keep her from the house ; as it were presaging the mischief which was to grow upon me, by her means ; and yet, on the other side , the occasion for her coming , was so plausible , that my Mother could not tell how to decline it. With Her (as I was saying) I came to have much delight, to converse. With her, was my acquaintance , and discourse ; because I found that she employed her self willingly upon all those ways of pass-time, wherein I delighted most : and also engaged me in them, giving me part, & knowledge of all her own conversations, and vanities. Till I began to be familiar with her, (when, I think, I was some fourteen years old, or rather a little more) I mean,till she had wrought her self into so much friendship with me , as to make me partake the knowledge of all her little affairs) I am much inclined to think, that I had never forfeited the favour of God, by any Mortal sin ; nor lost the fear of his Divine Majesty ; though yet still , I feared more to lose my honour. This had power enough with me, for not permitting me to lose it outright ; nor do I conceive, that any thing of this world,could make me change that resolution ; nor could the affection to any person whatsoever

soever have caused me to render it up. I would to God, I had so bounded in strength and courage, as not to make one pace against the honour of his Divine Majesty; as even a kind of natural constitution of mind, confirmed me, towards the not losing that, wherein I held the honour of this world to consist; though yet I considered not, the while that I lost, even that also, many ways. For the vain upholding hereof, I had even an extream resolution; though yet, for the proper and fit meanes, which was necessary for preserving it, I used none at all; only I was earnest, in taking care, that I might by no means lose my self outright.

My Father, and my Sister, were much troubled about this friendship of mine, and reproved me for it very often; but yet, they being unable to remove the occasion of her coming to us at times, their diligences were ever wont to fall short; for, my sagacity, in contriving any thing, which might be ill, was very great. I am sometimes upon this occasion, in a wonder, at how much hurt, ill company may do; and if it had not been mine own case, I could hardly believe it; especially, when it occurs in the time of innocent and fresh youth; for then doth it greatest hurt; and I could wish, that Parents would take some warning by me, that so they might consider it well. For, the truth is, that this conversation did work such an entire change upon me, that I, who formerly had a Soul, and natural constitution, inclined to Vertue, was grown to have in effect, no semblance, or signe at all thereof; and it seems, that both she, and yet another, who was, upon the matter, of the same humour, had imprinted their own conditions upon me. From hence also, I am grown to understand, how pretious a thing good company is; and I hold it for certain, that, if in that age of mine, I had conversed with only vertuous persons, I should have proved accomplished in the Vertue; and that, if, in those tender years, I had met with such as would have made it their busines to make me fear God, my soul would have gathered such strength, as might have kept it from falling. But afterward, this fear of God, growing to be lost, the care only of my honour remained; which gave me a kind of torment in whatsoever I did.

But now, with thinking, that such, &c such things would never be known I presumed to do many, which were both against my honour, & against God. In the beginning, these things did me harm, as I am apt to think; though yet perhaps, that hapned not by her fault, but mine own; but afterward, mine own wickednes was sufficient for mine own mischief; together with the help of our Maides, who were ready enough for any thing that was naught. If any one of them had but advised me well, it would have

Chap. I. 7
Holy Mother S. Teresa.

have served my turn ; but interest blinded them , as my inclination did me . And though I never was addicted to much ill (for even naturally I abhorred such things as concerned dishonesty) only I liked to pass my time in pleasant conversation ; but I , engaged once in these occasions , danger was near at hand ; in which I involved also my Father , and my Brothers . But God delivered me out of them in such sort , as that it well appeared , how he was pleased to procure , even against my will , to preserve me from my total perdition ; though yet still , things could not be carried so privately , as that my honour did not suffer prejudice by it , and a suspicion was raised in my Father . For I think there were scarce three moneths spent in these vanities , when they carried me to a certain Monastery in this town , where they were wont to give education to such as I was ; though yet not so untoward as my self . But it was done with great discretion and reserve ; for only I , and a kinsman of mine , knew of it ; and they staid a while , for a certain conjuncture of things , to keep it from seeming new or strange ; namely , for that my Sister was then lately married ; and so , it would not seem so very handsom , that I should stay at home alone , without a Mother .

The love , which my Father bore me , was so extream (and so also was my dissimulation) that he could not believe so much ill of me as I deserved ; and therefore I was not faine into his disfavour . For , the time having been but short , though perhaps , he might happen to hear of some little whispering , yet nothing could be related to him with any certainty ; in regard , that I having so tender a care of my self , in point of honour , all my diligences were employed upon keeping things secret ; and I considered not the while , how impossible a thing it was to hide any thing from him , by whom , all things are seen . O my God ! what a mischief doth it bring upon the world , to make light of this ; and to think that such things can be secret , as are done against you . For my part , I hold it for certain , that many great sins would be forborn , if once we would understand that the busines doth not consist in saving our selves harmless from men , but in keeping our selves from disgiunting God .

During the first eight days of my being in the Monastery , I resented it much ; but yet more , for the suspicion I had , that my vanity was discovered , then for that I was placed there . For now already , I became weary of doing ill ; and I failed not to have great fear of God , whosoever I offended him ; and I procured to Confess my self often .

But after those eight days , yea and peradventure sooner , I greyed ^{to} be better pleased there , then even in my own Fathers house . All the Religious were glad to be in my company ; for in this , our Lord endewed me

me with grace, that I alwayes gave contentment where I was; and so I was much beloved. And though I were at that time extreamly averse from becoming a Religious woman, yet I joyed to see so good Religious women, as they were, after an eminent proportion in that house; and of great purity, and observance, and recollection.

But yet, notwithstanding all this, the Devil gave not over to tempt me; and he found out such persons from abroad, as might disquiet me with certain mesages of theirs. But, in regard there was no great opportunity for those things, they quickly ceased; and my soul began again to accustom it self to the good impressions of my first youth; and I saw how great favour God doth them, whom he casts into their company, who are good. And it seemes, as if the Divine Majesty had gon looking and looking again by what means he might bring me back to himself. Blessed be thou, O Lord, who didst endure me so long; Amen. One particular there was, which, it seems, might turn a little to my excuse, if I had not been guilty of so many faults: And it is, that the Conversation which I held, was with a person, where it seemed to me, that by way of marriage, all might end well. And I informing my self about it, of my Confessor, and of others also, with whom I consulted in many things, they told me, that I offended not God in it.

But now, one of the Religious was lodged where we, who were secular persons, were also accommodated; and it seemes that our Lord was pleased to give me light by her means; as I will now declare.

CHAP. III.

Wherein she treats, how her falling into vertuous company, was the occasion of her returning to awake good desires in her self; And how our Lord began to give her some light of the error, wherein she had formerly been.

But now, I, beginning to take gust in the good and holy conversation of this Religious woman, was joyed to hear how well she was wont to speak of God; for she was very holy and discreet; and I conceive, I did never at any time cease to be glad to hear such discourse. She began one day to tell me how she became a Religious woman, by the only reading of that place of the Gospel, *That many are called, but few are chosen.* And she spake much to me, of the reward, which our Lord

Lord is wont to give to such as leave all things for the love of him. In a word, this good society of hers began quickly to put to flight, those customs and conditions which ill company had brought upon me; and restored the desire of eternal things to my thoughts; yea, and to strip me in some part of that great enmity, and opposition against becoming a Religious woman, which formerly had been very extream. But now, If I chanced to see any one, who shed many tears when she prayed, or was endued with other vertues, I carried a kind of envie towards her; though as for this heart of mine, it was so very hard, and even impenetrable in this kind, that if I should have read over the whole History of the Passion of our Blessed Saviour, I was not able to shed a tear; and this gave me a great deal of pain. In this Monastery, did I remain a year and a half; and I was much improved there. I began to say many Vocal prayers; and I procured of all the Religious, that they would recommend me much to God; to the end, that he might place me in such a way of Life, wherein I might be likely to serve him best. But still I desire, that I might not be a Religious woman, and that this might not be the state which God would give me; though yet still I was afraid to be married. At the end of the time, when I was there, I already began to be more inclined to be a Religious woman; though yet, not in that House where I was then, in regard of those actions of extraordinary vertue and penance which I understood they used; and which seemed to me of too much rigour. Yet there were some of the younger women, who encouraged me in this purpose; but if they all had been of one opinion, it would have been much to my true advantage. I had also a great friend in another Monastery; and this was partly a reason, why, if I would be a Religious woman, I would not yet be so in any other place than where that friend of mine was. For I carried more respect to my sensuality & vanity, then to the benefit which I might bring to my soul. These good thoughts of being a Religious woman, often hapned to me by times; but they were instantly sent away again; and I could not yet perswade my self to be one.

At this time, though my self were not altogether without care of my cure, yet our Lord was much fuller of desire to dispose me for that state, which would be best for my soul. He then gave me so great a sickness, that I was forced to return home to my Fathers house. And when once I was recovered, they conducted me to give a Visit to one of my Sisters in the Country; for the love which I bore her, was extream, and by her will I should never have parted from her. Her Husband did also love me very much; at least he regaled me highly. And even for this also

I am obliged to our Blessed Lord ; since in all places where I have been, I was ever treated after this manner ; notwithstanding that I have been as unthankful to him for it, as for his other favours.

Now in the way towards my Sister ; I had an Uncle, my Fathers Brother, who was a very discreet man, and of great vertue. He was a Widdower ; and our Lord went on disposing him for his own service ; and when he grew more in years, he left the world and became a Religious man ; and ended his life in such sort, that I believe he now enjoyes the Vision of God. He would needs have me (as I passed) remain with him some dayes. His usual exercise was to read good Books in the *Spanish* tongue ; and his discourse was most commonly of God, and of the vanity of the world ; and those books would he also make me read. And though I had no great liking to this, yet I pretended that I had ; for, in the point of giving contentment to others, I had ever an extream kind of care, how dear soever it might cost me. So that the same thing which had been a vertue in others, was a great fault in me ; because I often carried my self therein with much indiscretion. O my God ! By what ways did thy Divine Majesty go disposing me for that state, in which thou wert pleased that I should serve thee ; since thou didst even force me thus, as it were against my will, to force my self. Be thou blessed for all eternity ; Amen.

Though I stayed not long in that place ; yet, by the effect, which the words of God wrought in my heart, whether they were read or heard by me, together with so good company as that was, wherein I found my self then, I came to understand this Truth which I had learnt when I was yet but a Child ; That, namely, all was nothing ; and how great the vanity of the world was ; and that all would be shortly at an end ; and that I might justly fear, lest dying in that condition wherein I was, I might chance to drop down into Hell. And though my will did not yet entirely resolve me to make my self a Religious woman, yet I well discerned that it was the better and more secure state ; and so by little & little I determined to force my heart to embrace it. In this battail I remained three moneths, constraining my self with this reason : that the troubles and afflictions of being a Religious woman, could not be greater than the pain of Purgatory ; And that I having so well deserved Hell, it was not to be esteemed too much if I remained whilst I should live here, as in Purgatory, so that afterward, I might go straight to Heaven. For this was my desire. But yet even in this inclination of mine, to take this state upon me, I doubt I was more moved by a kind of servile Fear, than by Love.

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The Divel in the mean time represented to me, that I would never be able to suffer the difficulties and troubles of a Religious life; because formerly I had been used so delicately, and was so nice. But yet, against this also I defended my self as well as I could by the afflictions which Christ our Lord endured for me; and that so, it would not be much for me to endure some for him. I ought also to have considered that he would give me help to bear them. Yet I remember not whether I had this last consideration, or no; but I am sure I had temptations enough about that time! I then also grew to have great fits of fainting by a burning Feaver, into which I fell; for I always had little health.

But it gave me even my life at that time, that already I was grown to love good Books; and so I came to read the Epistles of S. Jerom, which helped me to such heart & courage, as to make me resolve that I would impart my purpose to my Father; which in effect, was even as much for me, as to take the very Habit upon me. For I was ever so affected to maintain the point of Honour, that me-thinks I could never have turned back again upon any terms, when I had once said it. But he loved me to so strange a proportion, that by no means I could win his consent; nor was the intercession of such persons as I procured to move him, in order to my end, of any power at all to prevail. The most that I could get at his hands, was, that when he should be dead, I might do what I listed with my self. But as for me, I was in doubt of mine own great weakness; as fearing that I might so lose ground, & fall back again: And so I thought it was not fit for me to content my self with the offer which he made; and I procured therefore, to obtain my end, by another means; which I will now declare.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein she relates how our Lord afflided her, to force her self to take the Habit of Religion; And of the many infirmities which he began to bring upon her.

In these days, whilst I passed on with such determinations, I perswaded one of my Brothers to become a Religious man; discoursing to him upon the vanity of the world; and so we both of us agreed to go very early together one morning to the Monastery, where that friend of mine remained, who was she, to whom I carryed so great affection;

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though yet in this last firm purpose of mine, I was grown to such a resolution, that I would have lived wheresoever I thought I might serve God best, or my Father should desire most that I might be; for now I sought more earnestly for the good of my soul; and made no account at all of rest or ease. And I remember (to the uttermost of what I can call to mind, and in very truth) that whilst I was going out of my Father's house, I believe the sharpnes of sense will not be greater in the very instant, or agony of my death, than it was then. For it seemed to me, as if every bone which I had in my body, had been disjoyned from all the rest. And there being no such love of God in me at that time, as was able to quench that love which my heart carryed to my Father and Friends; all that which then I did, was with so mighty a violence, that if God had not given me great help, mine own consideration would never have been able to carry me on; but here he allowed me such courage, even against my self, that I had power to put my purpose in execution.

At the instant of my taking the Habit, our Lord gave me well to understand how highly he favours them, who offer themselves violence for the doing him any service; though yet no body had found by me, but that I entred into the way of Religious Observance with much facility and good liking. But at that very instant I took so great contentment, to put my self into that manner of life as hath never failed me once, till this very hour. And God changed that driness wherein my soul had formerly been, into an extream tenderness; and all the observances of Religion gave me great delight; yea, and it is that whilst I was sometimes going up and down to sweep the house at such hours as before I had been wont to employ upon the gallantery and regalo of my person, and went considering, that now I was free from that subjection, it gave me a particular joy; and that so very great, that it amazed me; nor was it in my power to understand from whence the same should come. When I remember this, there can be nothing, how grievous soever, upon which, if it were set before me, I should not venture to attempt. For I have already good experience of things enough, to assure me, that since God did help me in the beginning to resolve to do such things as these (which being only done for the love of God, he ordains for our greater merit afterward, that our souls should be in some trouble and sorrow at the first, and the greater that trouble is, the greater and the more savoury also will the reward thereof fall out to be, if we go through with the business) his Majesty is also pleased to recompense them highly well, even in this life; by such ways, as he only who enjoys them

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can understand. This I say I have found true by experience in many particulars of great moment. And therefore, if I were a person who might be desired to give my opinion, I would never advise any that, when any good inspiration did often move and set upon a soul, it should give it over for fear of not performing the work. For, if one go on merely and purely for the only love of our Lord, there needs be no fear at all of good success; since the same Lord is powerful enough to prevail in all things; And let him be ever blessed, Amen.

These favours which thou hadst hitherto bestowed upon me, out of thine own meer goodness and greatness, might well have been sufficient, (O thou my Sovereign Good, and repose of my soul) to draw me towards thee, by so many windings and turnings to so safe a way of life; and to a Houte where there are so many Servants of thine, of whom I might learn to grow up in pleasing thee. Here I know not how I can pass on to think of any thing else, when I consider the manner of my Profession, and the great resolution and gust wherewith I made it; and the Espou-sals which I perfected with thee. For I cannot speak of this without tears, which ought to be even of blood; and no: without the breaking of my very heart (which yet could not be too great a resentment) when I weigh how deeply I offended thee afterward. Now me-thinks, that A had reason before, in not desiring so great a dignity as this; considering how ill I were like to employ it. But thou, O my Lord, wert pleased to permit that I might use this favour so ill twenty years together; and wouldest content thy self to be the person affronted, that I might be the person improved. For it seems not to me now, O my God, that I made thee any promise of any thing, but only, that I would keep no promise which I had made thee; though yet my intention was not such at that time.

And yet I find my actions to have grown afterward to be such, that I may very well think, I scarce know what kind of intention I had. And thus it may the better be seen who thou art; O my Spouse and my God, and who I am. For it is a certain truth, that the grief for my very great sins is moderated in me many times by the contentment which this consideration gives me, that my sinfulness may prove a means to make the multitude of thy mercies be understood. For in whom, O Lord, can they ever shine so brightly as in me; who have by my wicked actions so obscured those great favours which thou beganst to do me? Ah, wo is me, O my Creatour, for if I look for any excuse, I can find none; nor hath any creature the fault of it, but only my self; and if I would pretend to pay thee any thing for the least part of that Love,

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which thou beganst to shew me, I should not know how to employ it upon any thing, but only on thy self ; and thereby, might all be redressed. But since I never deserved this, nor have arrived at so great an happiness ; therefore now, O Lord, let thy mercy vouchsafe to supply all defects.

The change which I made of my life, and the difference of my food at this time from the former, began to do me hurt in the way of health ; for though the contentment which I had was great, yet would it not serve the turn. Fits of fainting and swooning began to encrease upon me ; and a pain of my heart so great, as amazed all them who saw it, besides many other infirmities. And thus I passed on my first year with a very infirme health ; though yet within that time I conceive my self not to have offended God much.

And now my sickness being so great, that it deprived me almost, yea sometimes altogether of my sensess ; the diligences which my Father used for my recovery, were also very great ; and when the Doctors of those parts found no remedy, he procured to get me removed to a certain place where there was great fame of the curing many other infirmities ; and so they assured themselves that they would also mine. That friend whom I mentioned to be in that House, went with me, who was of years ; in the Monastery where we lived, they made no Vow of Clau-sure. I stay'd almost a year in that place ; and during three moneths thereof, I suffered so excessive torments by the manner of the Cure, which was very rigorous, that I know not how I was able to endure them ; and though I did endure them, yet my Body could not bear it out, as I will now declare.

This Cure was to be taken in hand in the beginning of Summer ; and I went in the beginning of Winter. All this mean time, I remained in the house of that Sister, of whom I spoke before, who dwelt in the Country ; because I was then near the place, and it was troublesome to be going and coming to and fro. When I departed from that Uncle of mine, whom I declared my self to have visited in the way, he gave me a certain Book which is called *The third Abecedary* ; which treats of the manner of Prayer with Recollection. Now, though in that first year I had read some good Books, forbearing utterly to look upon any other (for I was not ignorant of the hurt which such as those had done me) yet I knew not how to proceed in Prayer, nor how to obtain recollections ; and so I was very glad of this Book, and determined to follow that way to the uttermost of my power. And since our Lord had already been pleased to bestow the gifts of tears upon me ; and since I delighted also

in reading, I began to spend some good portions of time in solitude; and to Confess my self very often; and in a word, to address my self by that way; esteeming that book to be my Master. For I could meet with no other Master, (I mean a Ghostly Father) who might understand me; though I sought such an one almost twenty years after this time. Which accident did me hurt enough towards the making me turn back often; yea, and the making me quite lose my self. When as such an one might have daily assisted me, to lay aside and quit those occasions which I took to offend God.

In these beginnings, his Divine Majesty began to do me so great favours, that during the time that I remained there, (which was about nine moneths) in this way of solitude; (though I were not so free from offending God as the Book appointed; which I neglected, as holding it impossible to continue still, so watchfull over my self) I was careful not to commit any Mortal sin; and would to God I had always been so; but of Venials I made no great account; and this was that, in fine, which destroyed me. But our Lord began to regale me so much by this way, that he vouchsafed me the favour to give me Quiet Prayer; and sometimes it came so far as to arrive to Union; though I understood neither the one nor the other; nor how much they both deserved to be prized. But I believe it would have been a great deal of happiness for me to have understood them. True it is, that this Union rested with me for so short a time, that perhaps it might arise to be but as of an *Ave Maria*; yet I retained with so very great effects thereof, that with not being then so much as twenty years old, me thought I found the whole world under my feet; and so I remember well, that I was wont to carry great companion for such as followed the ways of the world; though it were but even in lawful things.

I procured the best I could to carry our Lord, our true Good, still present within me; and this was the manner of my prayer. If I thought upon my passage or Mystery, I represented it in my interiour, though I spent more of my time in reading good Books; which was all the recreation that I had. For God gave not me the talent of discoursing with my Understanding, nor to help my self by the use of my Imagination, which I have so heavy and grosse, that even to think, and represent within my self so much as the Humanity of our Blessed Lord, (which I endeavoured to do) was yet more than I could possibly perform. And howsoever by this way of not being able to employ and set the understanding on work in the way of discourse, men may sooner arrive to Contemplation, if they persevere therein; yet it is very troublesome and pain-

Painful ; because if the employment of the will do fail so far of obtaining the true end, as that their Love find no present Object to embrace, the soul is left as it were without any exercise and support at all ; and that kind of solitude and drynes gives much trouble , and opens the way to a combate, and confusion of thoughts.

As for persons who are of this disposition, there is need of a greater purity of Conscience than for such others as are able to work and discourse by way of the understanding. For he who is able to discourse upon what this world is , and upon what he owes to God ; and how much he suffered for him ; and how little himself is able to serve him ; and what he bestows on such as love him ; will be able to draw instruction from thence, which may defend him from impertinent thoughts , and occasions, and dangers. But he who cannot serve himself thereof, run more hazard ; and shall therefore do well to employ himself much in reading, since he knows not of himself how to invent any thing.

This manner of proceeding is so extreamly painful , that if the Director , who instructs , shall urge him much to pray without reading (which greatly helps to recollect the person who proceeds thus ; yea and is necessary for him , though it be little which he reads ; save only in time and place of Mental Prayer , which he is not then able to make) I say, if without this help they make him stay much in Prayer, it will be impossible for him to last long therein ; and besides , it will do him hurt in point of health ; for it is extreamly painful.

Now it seems that our Lord provided so for me, since I found none to instruct me ; for it had been else impossible for me for those ey^tteen years to endure this extream difficulty, 2nd these great aridities through my not being able (as I was saying) to discourse. In all these time I never durst begin to Pray without a Book in my hand, unless it were instantly upon my having Communicated ; and as heartily was my soul afraid to be in Prayer without a Book , as if I had heen to fight with a multitude of people ; but by this remedy of a good Book, which was as a Guard or a Buckler, upon which the blows of many thoughts were to be received, I went on with comfort. For that drynes was not ordinary with me , though I had it always whensoever I had no Book in my hand ; for then my soul was instantly in disorder , and my thoughts wondred up and down. But with reading I began to recollect them, and carried my heart chearfully and delightfully on ; yea , and many times in the very opening my Book I found my self need no more. Sometimes also I read little, and sometimes much ; according to the favour which our Lord was pleased to do me, more or less. And it seugns to me, that if

if in those beginnings whereof I speak, I had had Books & means to continue in solitude, there could have been no danger which would have been able, to deprive me of so great a good. And I am also apt to think, that by the favour of Almighty God, it would have proved so, if I had had a Director, or some person who might have counselled me to avoid occasions in those beginnings, and to make me forsake them quickly, if I had been entred into them ; yea , and though the Devil should then have set openly upon me, I think that I could never have been brought to offend God grievously again ; but he was so very crafty , and I so wretched, that all these resolutions of mine did me little good ; but the time which I then spent in Gods service did me very much, towards the bearing those terrible sicknesses which I endured with so great patience as his Divine Majesty vouchsafed to bestow upon me.

I have often considered the great goodness of God, even with amazement ; and my soul hath been regaled to see the magnificence of his Mercy towards me. Let him be blessed for all things. For I have seen in most evident manner , that he hath not left any one good desire of mine without recompense even in this life ; and how imperfect and full of fault soever my works were, yet this Lord of mine went bettering, and perfecting them, and giving them worth ; and my sins and miseries he would instantly hide ; Yea his Divine Majesty hath permitted , that even the eyes of such as saw them , should be blinded , and their memories fail when they would remember them. He even gilds my faults, and makes that vertue shine bright, which he , the same Lord , conveys unto me ; and wherein he offers me even a kind of violence , that I may receive it.

But I will now return to speak of those things which they have commanded me to declare : And I say, that if I be to set forth exactly in what sort our Lord proceeded with me in these beginnings , it will require another manner of understanding than mine , to know how to express all that with advantage , for which I am obliged to him in this particular ; and to publish mine own ingratitude and wickedness, since all this I have passed over. Let him be blessed for ever, who hath endured so much at my hands ; Amen.

C H A P . V .

She prosecutes the relation of the great infirmities which she had; and of the patience which our Lord gave her in them; and how benefits are drawn out of mischiefs: as will be seen by a certain particular which happened to her in the place whither she went to be cured.

I Forgot to relate how in the year of my Noviceship , I suffered much disquiet about some things which in themselves were of little importance ; I found my self to be blamed many times without having made a fault ; and this I took with trouble and imperfection enough ; though yet I endured it all through the contentment which I had to be a Religious woman. When they observed me to love solitude so well, and saw me shed tears somtimes, (which was for my sins) they thought, yea, and said, that it grew from some melancholly and disgust. For my part, I had a great affection to all the observances of a Religious life, save only that I knew not how to endure any thing which might carry so much as an appearance of contempt with it ; for I delighted in being esteemed. I was curious about whatsoever I took in hand; and all seemed to me vertue, though yet this will never serve me for a discharge, because I knew well enough in all these, how to procure that which might give me guilt; and so ignorance frees me not from blame. Some excuse it is, that this Monastery was not founded in much perfection; & I (as being wicked enough) went roundly on, to that , wherein I saw there was imperfection ; but laid no hold at all upon the rest which was good.

There was a Religious woman at that time, and in that place, sick of a very grievous infirmity , which put her to extream pain ; for she had certain Ulcers in her body , which grew from great obstructions ; and thereby did she discharge whatsoever she took. She dyed quickly of that disease ; and whereas I found that all the rest of our Community had great apprehension and fear of the like ; for my part I had much envy at her patience ; and I begged of God, that in case I might be favoured by him with that vertue , he would send me what sicknesses he should think fit ; and I thought I feared no disease in the world ; for I was so bent and set upon the gaining of eternal Happines , that I resolved to compass it how dear soever it might cost me. Nor yet am I without wonder at this ; for then I possessed not to my thinking such a love of

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God, as, afterwards I conceived my self, to have upon my beginning to frequent the use of Prayer. But only I was grown to have a certain light whitch shewed me how all things which come to an end, deserve little esteem; and how those Blessings, which being eternal, may be obtained, are of mighty value. His Divine Majesty did also hear me in this; for before two years were expired, I grew to be in such condition, that howsoever my disease were not of that other sort, yet I believe that this which I had for three years together, was not a whit of less trouble and torment to me, than that other was to her; as I shall now relate.

The time being come, which I was expecting in that place, where I have declared my self to remain, with my Sister, for my better Cure, with much care of my content and conveniences, there conducted me to that place, my Father, my Sister, and that Religious Woman, my friend, who came with me thither, and indeed loved me very much. And now here did the Devil begin to discompose my soul; though yet Almighty God drew much good from thence.

There was a certain Churchman residing in that place (to which I went for cure) of very good quality and understanding; and he was also not unlearned. Now I began to Confess my self to him; for I was ever a friend of learning; but yet it did my soul much hurt to meet with Ghostly Fathers, who were but indifferent in that kind; because they wanted what I needed. And therefore, as for me, I have found by experience, that when Ghostly Fathers are virtuous men, and of holy conversation, it is better that they have no learning at all, than but a little. Because neither such as have none, are w^tnt to trust themselves, without asking the opinion of more learned men than they are; neither should I also trust them; and for my part, I was never deceived by any solid learned man; yea, and even those others also would certainly, I think, not have deceived me, but only perhaps they erred because they knew no better. Now I thought it was sufficient, and that I was bound to nothing but to believe them, when that which they taught me was according to the more large opinion, and of more liberty; for if they had been more restrained, I am so wicked, that I should have gon to others. But that which was a Venial sin, they told me was no sin at all; and that which was a most grievous Mortal sin, they said was but Venial. This did me much hurt, so that it must not go for a strange thing to hear me speak of it here for the better advertisement of others, whom I would very fain save from so great a mischief. For I see well, that in the presence of God, this was no discharge of me from fault; for it ought to

have been sufficient for me that the things were of themselves not good to make me preserve my self wholly from them. I believe God permitted it for my sins, that both they should be deceived, and deceive me; as I also deceived many others by telling them that very thing which I had been told. I continued I think in this blindness more than seventeen years, till a Father of S. Dominicks Order, a great learned man unbeguiled me in some things; and till they of the Society of Jesus did so wholly terrifie me, by aggravating to me those ill beginnings of mine; as I will shortly declare.

But now I confessing my self to that other Ecclesiastical person, of whom I was speaking before, he grew to affect me in extream manner; because then indeed I had little to Concl. in comparison of what occurred afterwards; nay, I had not very much from the time of my entring into Religion. The affection of this man was not ill; but yet by the access thereof, it grew to be not good. He well understood already that I would not resolve upon any terms to do any thing which was grievously offensive to Almighty God; and he also assured me of as much concerning himself; and so our conversation grew to be frequent. But in those times of conference which we had, I was so fully possessed, and even swallowed up by the thoughts on Almighty God, that the greatest gust I had, was to be speaking of him; and I being then so very young, it put him to a kind of confusion to see it; and through the great affection which he bore me, he began to discover his own misery to me, which was not small; for they were then almost seaven years that he had been in a very dangerous state by his affection and conversation with a certain woman of the same Town; when yet he said Mass all the while. Now, this was so publick a thing, that he had already lost his honour and fame; & yet no body adventured to speak to him against it: Neither did I think fit to do it, though I were much troubled to see in what case he was; because I loved him much. For I had this part of folly and blindnes, that even here I thought it fit to be grateful, and to keep loyalty to one who loved me. But cursed be that correspondence which extends it self so far as to be against the Law of God. This is a very mad kind of error which is used now so much in the world; and it puts me almost out of my wits to see that we should owe all that goodness which men do us, to the goodness of God; and yet, that we should esteem it for a vertue, not to break this friendship with men, thought it should offer to carry us against him. O strange blindness of the world! O, that thou wouldest be pleased to let me be the most ungrateful creature that lives towards the said whole world, so that yet, I were not ungrateful

to the least haire's breadth against thee. But alas, I have proceeded very contrarily to this course, whereof I speak in punishment of my other sins.

I procured in the mean time to informe my self concerning this man, by means of his domeſticks; and ſo I came to understand more of his miſery; but yet I found withal, that the poor ſoul was not altogether ſo extreamly faulty as men thought; because that wretched woman had bewitched him by a certain little Idol of Copper which ſhe had prayed him to wear about his neck for love of her; and no body had been of power enough to make him leave it. For my part, I confeſs, I cannot believe the buſineſſ of ſuch witchcrafts, as this, determinately true and certain; but yet I will relate what I ſaw, for the better aduizing men to take heed of all women who proceed in ſuch ſort as this; and to the end that men may believe, that when women come to loſe the fear of God, (for that they are even more obliged to be honest and chauſt than men) there is no truſt at all to be repoſed in them; for, ſo that they may have their wiſs, and that the love which the Devil plants in them, may not be croſſed, they never care what they do. But as for me, though I had been very wicked, yet I never fell into any thing of this nature; nor ever pretended to do ſuch harm to any one; no, nor, if I ſhould have been able, would I ever yet have forced any body to affect me. Our Lord kept me always from this; whereas, if ever he had left me to my ſelf, I ſhould certainly have done as ill in this kind, as in other; for in me there was no truſt to be had. But now, when I came to understand this ſtory, I began to ſhew him more affection. My intention, indeed, was good herein, but yet my action faulty; for I ſhould not have committed the leaſt ill, for the obtaining of the greateſt good that could be thought. I diſcourſed to him very ordinary of God, which perhaps might do him ſome good; though yet I am more apt to think that the great affection which he bare me, was the thing which wrought more vehemently upon me, for, to do me a very great pleaſure, he gave me his little Idol, which I iſtantely cauſed to be caſt into the river. After this, he began quickly (like ſome man, who had been awaکed out of a profound ſleep) to goe recovering and remeмbering all that which he had done in thoſe paſt years; and to be a-mazed at himſelf; and ſo bewailing his miſery, he came by thoſe degrees to abhor it. Our B. Lady without all queſtion affiſted him much; for he was very particularly devoted to her Immaculate Concepſion; and his cuſtome ever was to celebraTe that Feſtivity with great joy. In fine, he utterly gave over ſo much as once, to ſee that woman any more; and could never ſatisfie himſelf with thanking Almighty God very muCh for

the light which he vouchsafed to give him. And so just upon that day twelve-moneth, after I had known him first, he dyed. But already he was grown to serve God in very serious manner; and though I never could perceive that the great affection which he bare me, was ill, yet it might have been more pure; and so also there was no want of occasions, wherein, if the presence and assistance of God had not been close at hand, his Divine Majesty might have been much offended. But, whatsoever *I* might then have conceived to be Mortal sin, I would, certainly, not have committed it; and even his seeing that disposition in me, might, perhaps, make him love me the better. For, all men, I believe, are more the friends of those women, whom they see inclined to virtue; yea, and even, when they do pretend to this, such women gain more upon such men; as I shall declare afterward. But *I* hold it for very certain, that his soul is in the way of salvation; for he dyed very well; and clearly freed from this occasion, it seems, our Lord was pleased, that he should be saved, by this means.

I remained in that place, three moneths, with extream affliction; for, the Cure was, by much, too hard for my complexion; and so, at the end of two moneths of those three, the roughness of those remedies, did even, as it were, make an end of my very life; and withall, the rigour of my hearts sicknes, of which *I* went to be cured, was grown to be much more fierce; in such sort, that, now and then it seemed to me, as if my very heart had been peirced, and penetrated with sharp teeth; so that they were afraid I would run mad. By this great los and want of strength, (for *I* was able to take no food at all, except it were liquid, and that with great reluctance) I had a continual burning Feaver, and *I* was totally consumed; for they had daily given me a Purge, for almost a whole moneth together; and indeed, *I* was even so burnt up, that my sinews began all to shrink; and this, with so insupportable torments, that *I* could not take any rest, either by day or night; and all this while, *I* was also oppressed with a most profound sadness of mind.

With such a kind of gain in point of health as this, my Father brought me back to his house, where the Physitians came to visit me again; and they all gave me utterly over; for they said that besides all the rest, *I* was settled in a Heftick Feaver. But this troubled me very little; for that which afflicted me was the sharp and bitter pain which never gave me over, but vexed me even all alike, from head to Foor. For, the torment of the sinews is a kind of intollerable thing, as the Doctors affirm; and especially when they all shrink up as mine did; and certainly, if *I* had

had not lost the merit of it through mine own fault, the torment was strong enough to have entitled me to it.

I continued not above three moneths in this rage of pain; but it seemed even a kind of impossible thing for me to endure such a heap of afflictions all together. And now I am even amazed at my self, and I hold for a great favour of our Lord, the patience which his Divine Majesty was pleased then to give me; for it was evident that it came from him. It assisted me also much towards the having this patience, that I had read the History of Job in the Morals of S. Gregory; and our Lord seems to have prevented me so by that means; as also with having begun so to use Prayer, as that I might be able to carry my pain with much conformity to his holy will. The conversation of my heart was wholly with him; and I carried these words of Job very usually, both in my thought, and in my mouth: *Since we have received good things from the hand of our Lord, why should we not also suffer evil?* And I conceived that this helpt to give me courage.

At length came the Feast of our B. Lady in *August*; for till then, from the *April* before, had my torment continued; though yet it had been greater in the three last moneths. I then made haste to go to Confession; for, I ever took much contentment to confess often. My friends thought that it was fear of death which invited me to be so devout; and so, to the end, that I might not be put into apprehension, my Father would not let me Confess. O inordinate, and irregular love, of flesh, and blood; which, though I had so Catholick a Father, and so full of prudence, and consideration, in all his actions, as he was very much (and so this could not be an effect of ignorance) might have done me hurt enough. That night, I fell into such a Trance, as continued to keep me near four days, without the use, almost, of any of my senses; and shortly, they came to give me the Sacrament of *Extreme Unction*; and every hour, or rather every moment, it was expected, when I should expire, they being diligent in repeating the Creed to me, as if I had understood them; sometimes they held me for so certainly dead, that afterwards, I found the drops of the holy Wax-Candles a-mine eyes. The affliction of my Father was great, for his not having permitted me to go to Confession. Many out-cryes, and many prayers, were made to God for me; and blessed be he, who was pleased to hear them; for, the Vault remaining open, in the Church of my Monastery, a day and a half, where my body was expected to be interred; and my Funeral having been already celebrated, by the Religious men of our Order, in another Town, where it was

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conceived that I was dead , our Lord was yet pleased at length that I should return to my self ; and so instantly , I would needs go to Confession . I received also the B. Sacrament with many tears ; though yet , in my opinion , they were not shed with that sense and grief , for only my having offended God ; which might have served to save my soul ; if the error into which I was brought by them , who had told me that some things were not mortal sin , (which afterward I saw plainly that they were) might not somewhat beftead me . For , the torments wherewith I then remained , were intollerable ; and my understanding dull ; though yet (as I conceived) my Confession were entire , of all things , whereby I might think that I had offended God . For , this mercy did his Divine Majesty vouchsafe to allow me , amongst others , that after I began to receive the B. Sacrament , I never omitted to Confess any thing which I conceived to be a sin , though it were but Venial ; yet still , me-thinks , that , without doubt my soul might have run an hazard , of not being saved , if I had dyed then ; in regard , that on the one side , my Ghostly Fathers had been so meanly learned ; and , on the other side , so wicked .

This is most certain , that , when I return to a thought of this passage ; and to consider , how it seems , as if our Lord had raised me again , from death to life , I am filled with so huge an amazement , that I remain , even as it were , all quaking within my self . And now , me thinks , it were well , O my soul , that thou wouldest gather this just resolution from that great danger , out of which it pleased our Lord to deliver thee ; that , although thou wouldest not fly offending his Divine Majesty for Love , yet at least thou shouldest forbear to do it for Fear . For he might have taken thy life from thee , a thousand times , when thou wert yet in a more dangerous state ; and I think , that I should not say too much , if I did speak of a thousand times more ; though he , perhaps , may chide me , who commanded me to use moderation , in the recital of my sins ; and I have painted them out , too favourably , and fair . But I beg of him for the love of our Lord , that he will not once think of making me diminish my faults ; because the magnificence of God is discerned thereby , and how much he is pleased to suffer , and endure , from a soul . Let him be Blessed for ever ; and let it also please his Divine Majesty , that he may rather consume me quite , than that I should any more cease to love him .

C H A P . V I .

She treats of how much she owed our B. Lord, for his giving her Conformity to his holy Will in so great afflictions; and how she took the glorious S. Joseph for her Intercessor; and how advantagious that Devotion proved to be.

I Remained, during those four days of Agony, or Trance, in such state, that only our B. Lord is able to know the unsufferable torments which I felt in my self. My tongue was deeply bitten by me, in many places. My throat, with having taken nothing, and by reason also of my very great weakness, could not swallow so much as a drop of water, without choking. Methought I was totally dis-joyned; and my head in extrem disorder. I was also, as it were, all rowled up, and contracted, as if I had been a Bottom of Packthread; for, in this, did the torments of those days terminate themselves, without my being able once to stir either hand, or foot; arme, or head; (unless they moved me) any more, than as if I had been dead. Only, I think, I was able to wag one single finger of my right hand. Now, for any body to touch me, in any kind, there was no means at all; for, my whole person, was so affected, and afflicted, as that there was no enduring to have it touched. In a sheer, they would be removing me, now, and then, according to the occasion, with one, at one end thereof, and another, at the other; and this lasted till Easter. Only this I had, by way of ease; that, if I were not approached, and touched, these torments would relent many times; and then, upon the account of my being in less pain, I was content, to affirm my self to be well. But indeed, I was much afraid, lest my patience should begin to fail me; and therefore, I was not a little pleased, to find my self, without those sharp and continual torments; though yet, in the cold fits of a double quartan, which I had very violent, I had these pains still after an unsupportable manner; together with a very great detestation of food.

At this time, I so earnestly solicited my return to the Monastery, that I got my self to be carried away, as I was. And they received her, whom they expected for dead, with a soul, which was yet in the body; but the body it self, worse than dead, through the pain they saw, it endured. The great extremity of my weakness, cannot be related; for, I had no-

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thing left, but my skin, & bones ; and that I continued thus, above eight moneths ; but I was directly a Cripple, (though yet I were then, on the mending hand) upon the point of three years. When now, I began to goe creeping along, I thanked God, as for a good degree of amendment. But I passed through all these afflictions, with great conformity, to the holy will of God ; yea, and (unless it were in the very beginnings) with much alacrity and joy. For I esteemed it all, as nothing, being compared with those pains and torments, wherein I had been before ; and I was wholly resigned then to God's holy will, although he should have left me in that state for ever. I am of opinion, that all the anxietie of my desire to recover, was only, that I might apply my self to Prayer all alone, as I had been instructed ; but for this, there was no means in the Infirmary. I Confessed my sins very often ; I spake with them much of God ; in such sort, as that it edifyed them all ; and indeed, they were amazed to see the patience which our Lord imparted to me. For, if it had not come from the hand of his Divine Majesty, it seemed a kind of impossible thing to endure such a deal of torment with so much contentment.

A point of great moment, that favour was, which our B. Lord had vouchsafed to do me in Prayer ; for, this, made me come to know, what it was to love him ; and after a little time spent therein, I found several vertues grow up afresh in me ; though yet, they were not strong, nor able to hold me upright in strict account. I spake not ill of any Creature, how little soever it might be ; but my ordinary custom, was, to avoid all manner of detraction ; for I, always had this thought present with me, that I was never to wish, nor to say any such thing of any Creature, as I would not have them say of me ; and I took this so extreamly to heart in all such occasions, as might occur (though yet, not still, so very perfectly, when sometimes any great occasion was offered me to break my Rule) that this was my constant use ; and I perswaded such as were wont to be much in my company, and conversation, so earnestly to this practise, that it grew also with them into a custome. By this means, it came commonly to be understood, that wheresoever I chanced to be, all absent persons were safe ; and as much priviledged for this, as any of my near friends or kindred, or others, whom I instructed, though in other things I have a great account to make to God, for the ill example which I gave. I beseech his Divine Majesty, to forgive those many ill things, whereof I have been cause ; howsoever, I was not so, with so wicked intentions as the action afterward proved. I remained with great liking to enjoy Solitude ; and I also loved, in par-

Particular manner, to discourse, and treat of things, concerning God ; and if still, I could find, with whom, to do it, that gave me more contentment, and even recreation, than all the politeness, or rather, I think, I may say, rudeness, of worldly conversation could do ; and I loved to Confess, and Communicate oftner, than I had done ; and to desire it much ; and to be extreamly affected, with reading good Books ; and to have so extraordinary a sorrow, for having offended God, that many times, I remember, how I durst not adventure, to put my self into Prayer ; because I feared that excessive pain, which I was sure I should feel, in the quality of a great punishment, for my offences. And this, grew afterwards, to such an extremity, that I know not, to what, in fine, I may well compare this torment. But now, this never happened to me, either more or less, for any fear at all, but only when I remembred those regalo's, which our Lord hath been pleased, to vouchsafe me, in my Prayer ; and the very much, that I owed his Divine Majesty, for those high Favours ; and when I saw, how ill I paid him for all his goodness, I was not able to endure it. Yea, and I found my self also, extreamly offended with my self, even for the many tears, which I shed, for the fault, when I saw the so little amendment, which I made ; whilst, neither my resolutions, nor the pain, and care, wherein I was, not to fall back again, when once the occasion should be offered, were sufficient to stay me. For then, even my very tears, seemed deceitful to my self ; and my fault also appeared so much the fowler, because I saw the great favour, which our Lord was pleased to do me, by imparting those tears to mine eyes, and so great repentance to my heart. I procured here to Confess my self quickly ; and, in my opinion, did what I could, on my part, to return into his favour.

But, all my misery, indeed, consisted, in that I pluckt not the occasions of Sin, up, by the root ; and partly also, in those Ghostly Fathers, who assisted me little ; for if they had once directly declared to me, the danger, wherein I was, from time to time ; and that I was obliged, not to haved passed my hours, in such conversations, I am very confidently perswaded, that all, would have been quickly redressed ; for I should never have endured, to pass one day, in Mortal Sin, if I had understood it.

All these signs, of my endeavouring, to fear, and serve God, came to me, by Prayer ; and the greatest of them was, that I walked, as it were, all involv'd in love ; for, as for the punishment of sin, it never once appeared before me. All the while, that I was so sick, I continued to keep a very close guard, upon my Conscience ; for as much as might

concern Mortal Sin. But, O my dear Lord, how vehemently did I desire, to be restored to my health, to serve thee, better ; whereas yet, in very deed, it was the occasion of all my misery. But now, when I found my self so lame, and even such a Cripple, and that, whilst I was yet so very young, and how the Physicians of this World, had dressed me, and to what state, they had brought me, I resolved, that I would apply my self, to those of the other, to the end, that they might cure me ; for I still desired to recover my health, though yet I endured my sickness, with great alacrity. And I would be thinking, sometimes, that, if, by enjoying my health, I might chance to be damned, it would be better for me, to remain still, as sick as I was ; but howsoever, I conceived, that I should serve God, much better, enjoying health. Now, this is the abuse and error, which deceives us, not to resign our selves entirely, to the disposition, and good pleasure, of our Lord ; who knows best, what is fit for us. But, in the mean time, I got many Masses said, for this purpose ; and I resorted also, to the use of other approved means of Prayers ; for I was never a friend of some other devotions, which are used by divers persons, and especially by Women ; with some Ceremonies, which I could never endure, since I understood, that they favoured of Superstition ; howsoever some others were moved by them. And so I took, for my Advocate, and Lord, the Glorious S. Joseph ; and I recommended my self much, to him ; and I have seen clearly, that this Father, and Lord of mine, hath drawn me, as well out of this necessity, as out of other greater ; when there was question of Honour, and loss of my Soul ; and that, with more benefit, and advantage, than even my self could tell, how to desire. Nay, I cannot remember, that hitherto I ever desired any thing, by his means, which he hath failed to obtain for me ; and it is able, even to amaze me, when I consider the great Favours, which Almighty God hath done me, by means of this Blessed Saint ; and the dangers, both of Body, and Soul, out of which, he hath delivered me. In such sort, as that it seems, our Lord hath given the grace, and power, to other Saints, to succour Men, in some one kind of necessity of theirs ; but I find, by good experience, that this glorious Saint, succours us, in them all ; and that our Lord will make us understand, that as he would be subject to S. Joseph, upon Earth, and that (by enjoying the name, of his Father, and by being, as it were, his Director, and Tutor,) he might then command him : so also he would now, in Heaven, grant, whatsoever this Saint should desire. This truth, hath also been known by the experience of others, whom I have desired, to recommend themselves to this Saint ; and now, many are grown to be devoted to him ; and my self also, have fresh experience of this truth.

I procured to celebrate his Festivity, with all the solemnity, I was able to use ; but yet, with more vanity, than true spirit ; desiring, that it might be performed, with much curiosity, and exactness ; though yet still, with good intention. But I ever had this, of ill ; That if our Lord enabled me, at any time, to do any thing, which was good, it would be full of imperfections, and faults ; whereas, towards the doing anything amiss, and for the exercising of curiosity, and vanity, I used much diligence, and dexterity, our Lord pardon me for it. And now, I would fain perswade all the world, to be devoted to this glorious Saint, for the great experience, which I have had, of the blessings, that he obtains for us, of God ; nay, I have never known any one, who is seriously devoted to him, and performs to him particular services, whom I find not also, to much advanced in virtue ; for he assists those souls much, which recommend themselves to him. And to my best remembrance, there are divers years, wherein I have desired somewhat of him, upon his Festival Day, and I have ever found it granted ; and if, peradventure, my petition were any way deficient, he redressed it, for my greater good.

If I were any such person, as had authority to write, I would gladly enlarge my self here, to make particular relation, of the Favours, which this glorious Saint hath obtained, both for me, and others ; but, to the end, that I may do no more, than I am commanded, I must be shorter, in many things, than I would, & more large in others, than is needfull; like one, in fine, who hath little discretion, for the doing of any thing, which is good. Only I beg for the love of God, that whosoever cannot believe me, will try the truth, of what I say ; for he shall find by experience, how greatly it avails to recommend himself, to this glorious Patriarch, & to be devoted to him. Especially such, as give themselves to Prayer, should always be affectionate to this Saint ; for I know not, how, one can think of the Queen of the Angels, at those times when she suffered so much, during the Infancy of our Lord Jesus ; and not give thanks to St. Joseph, for the great assistance, which he gave them at that time. Whosoever wants a Master, who may instruct him to pray, let him take this glorious Saint, for his guide ; and he shall never lose his way.

I beseech our Lord, that I may have committed no error, in presuming to speak of this Saint ; for though I thus profess, and publish my self, to be devoted to him ; yet have I been ever faulty, in the not doing him real services, and in not imitating his vertues. But now, he did like himself, by procuring, that I might be able, to rise, and walk, and be no longer a Cripple ; and so I did also like my self, in making so ill use of this favour.

But now, who would ever have imagined, that I could so soon, fall back again, after my receiving so many regalo's, at the hands of Almighty God ; and after his Divine Majesty, had vouchsafed to give me some Vertues, which (even, as it were, of themselves) did awake, and stir me up, to his service ; and after I had seen my self, even, as it were, dead, and in so eminent danger, to be condemned to Hell ; and after he had raised me again, both in Body, and Soul, in such sort, that all they, who saw me, were even amazed to find me alive. But, what is this, O my Lord, Must we then live still in so perilous a life ?

Even now, whilst I am writing this, methinks, that, by your favour, and mercy, I might say with S. Paul, (though yet, not with such perfection,) that now, *It is not I, who live ; but thou, O my Creator, who livest in me* ; and that according to the experience, which I have had some years, by that little, which I am able to understand of my self ; and still thou holdest, and keepest thy hand over me ; and I find my self, full of desires, and good purposes ; and, in some sort, I have proved also (even by experience of many things, in these late years) that I would, by no means, do any thing, which should contradict, or cross thy will, how little soever it might be ; though yet, I well believe, that I commit many offences, against thy Divine Majesty, even without my understanding it. And it also seems to me, that there could not, so hard a thing be set before me, which I would not execute, for love of thee, with great resolution ; and sometimes, thou hast so assisted me therein, as that such things have taken effect ; and, for my part, I care not for the World, nor for any Creature in it ; nor can I find, that any thing at all, gives me gust, which swarves from thee ; nay more, it seems a very heavy crost to me.

Yet I may easily deceive my self herein ; and so, I think, I do ; for I doubt, that I possess not all this, whereof I speak ; but yet thou seest well, O my Lord (forasmuch as I am able to understand) that I do not lie. And I am fearing, and that with very much reason, that, perhaps, thou maist yet, leave me once again ; for I am not now to be told, how short a way, mine own strength, is able to carry me ; and how little vertue I have, in case thou be not ever, at hand, to allow me thy benedictions, and succours ; to the end, that so, I may never forsake thee ; yea, and I beseech thy Divine Majesty, that even now, I be not already forsaken by thee, whilst yet I have this conceit of my self.

For my part, I know not, how we can desire to live, since all things are so uncertain here. It seemed to me, O my Lord, to be already even an impossible thing, that I should, so entirely, forsake thee ; but since I have

have forsaken thee so often, I cannot but fear the like again ; because, when thou hast retired thy self, never so little, from me, all fell instantly down to the ground. Blessed be thou for ever, O Lord ; for, howsoe'er I forsook thee, thou wouldest not yet, so entirely, forsake me ; but that still, thou gavest me thy hand, that so I might be able, to rise again ; though many times, O Lord, I would not take hold by it ; nor would I understand, how thou vouchsafedst to call me again, very often ; as I will now declare.

C H A P . VII.

She shews, by what degrees, and means, she went losing the favour, which our Lord hath done her; and how ill, she began to live. And she also declares the harm there is, in not maintaining Clauſure, in the Monasteries of Religious Women.

I Began, from one pastime, to another ; from one vanity, to another ; and from one occasion, to another, to cast my self deeply, into so very great occasions ; and to carry my Soul so disordered, upon many vanities, that already, I grew even ashamed, to approach towards God, with so particular a kind of friendship, and familiarity, as frequent Prayer requires ; and I was forwarded in that ill way, by this, That as my sins grew to encrease, the gust, and regalo, which I had received in the exercise of vertue, began to fail me. I perceived very clearly, O my Lord, that these good things were wanting to me now, because I had first been wanting to thee. But, yet, this was, in the mean time, the most terrible cosening kind of wrong, which the Devil could possibly put upon me, when he made me begin, to fear, to make Prayer ; because, I saw my self so lost ; and, me thought, it was better for me, to proceed, as the multitude did, since I was amongst the worst of them, who are wicked ; and to pray, but as much, as I was bound ; and that, but vocally ; and that a Person, who deserved to be with the Devil, was not to use Mental Prayer, and to hold so streight conamerce, with God ; and that I did but seek, to deceive the World ; because exteriourly, I made shew of vertue. In the mean time, for this reason, the House, wherein I lived, did deserve no blame, at all ; because I procured, with my fair carriage, all that while, that they should have me, in good opinion. Neither did I this, of set purpose, by counterfeiting piety ;
for,

For, touching this point of Hypocrisie, and Vain-glory, I humbly thank God, that I remember not my self, to have offended him therein, for ought I can perceive; for upon the very first motion, to commit that kind of sin, I ever received, and felt, so much trouble, that the Devil was wont to go away with loss, and I remained with gain; and therefore he would never tempt me much in this kind; though yet perhaps, if God had permitted him to endeavour it as strongly in this, as he did in some other things, I should also have fallen into this sin. But his Divine Majesty hath been pleased hitherto, to preserve me herein, for which, let him be eternally praised. Nay, rather it troubled me much, that they should hold me, in good opinion, considering, what I knew, in private, of my self. But the true reason, of their believing me, not to be so wicked, proceeded from this, That they saw me, being so young, to retire my self, many times, and upon several occasions, to Solitude; and to pray, and read much; and talk of God; That I loved to make the picture of our Blessed Saviour, be set up, in many places; and to have an Oratory; and to procure, to put such things there, as might cause devotion; and not to speak ill of any; and other things also of this nature, which carried a kind of appearance of virtue with them; and I knew well enough (so vain I was) how to win esteem for my self, by those things which the world is wont to prize.

Upon these observations of theirs, they allowed me as much, yea and more liberty, than to the more antient Religious women of the House; and they were confident of me, in all things; for, as for my taking liberties to my self, or to do any thing at all, without leave, yea, or to speak with any body in corners, or holes, or by night, me-thinks, I could never have resolved my self so much, as to talk with any on this manner in a Monastery; neither did I ever so; because our Lord held me up in his hand. For it seemed to me (who reflected much, and with much attention, upon many things) that, to put the honour of so many Religious women in hazard, whilst they were good, because I was wicked, had been a very unworthy part in me; as yet perhaps I should have done, by making strangers think, that they used also to do the like. But why do I speak of my avoiding to do ill things, as if any thing which I did, had been well done? Though yet, the truth be withal, that the evil which I did, was not performed by me, with so much reflection, and advertance, as this must have been, though yet it were with too much. For this reason, I am of opinion, that it brought me much hurt that I was in a Monastery, not enclosed. Which they, who were good, might well enjoy without any disadvantage to their goodness; because they owed

no more, since they did not promise Clauſure ; but as for me , who am wicked, it would certainly have carried me down to Hell ; unless our Lord had drawn me , out of this danger, by very many remedies, and means, and most particular favours. And ſo, me-thinks, a Monastery of Women, with liberty, exposes them, to very great hazard ; and rather appears in me a way, whereby they, who have a mind to be wicked, may walk on, towards Hell, than a remedy for their weakness. I mean not this, by my own Monastery ; for therein, are ſo many, who ſerve our Lord, ſo much in earnest, and with ſo great perfection, that his Divine Maſtety, through his goodneſs, cannot faile of doing them favour. Neither is this Monastery alſo, of the moſt open, and diſ-enclosed ; and beſides, all good Religious Order is obſerved in it ; but I ſpeak, what I was ſpeaking, of others, which I know, and have ſeen. I ſay therefore, that thoſe others, give me cauſe, to have great compassion of them ; for they haue need of particuſar motions, and calls, from our Lord ; and not once, but very often ; that ſo, they may be ſaved ; conſidering, how muſh the honours, and recreations of the World, are now grown to be auothorized ; and how little, ſuch, as they are, understand the very muſh, to which they are obliged. So that I beſeech God, they hold not that, ſometimes, for vertue, which is fin ; as my ſelf did often ; yea, and there is ſo great diſſiculty, in making this, to be rightly apprehended, that there is need of no leſs, than that our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, ſhould ſeriously, put his hand to the work.

... If Fathers would take my counſel (ſince they will not procure, to put their Daughters, where they may walk in the way of Salvaſion, but rather be in moſe danger, than they ſhould, perhaps, haue met with in the World) I would advise them, at laſt, to conſider their own honour ; and rather to marry them very meanly, than to put them into ſuſh Monaſteries, as thoſe, unleſs they be very vertuously inclined ; yea, and I pray God, that even this, may ſerve the turn. Yea, or elſe, let them rather continue them, in their own Houſes ; for if they will needs be wicked, it cannot be there kept private, but for a very ſhort time ; but here, it may be long concealed, though yet, in the end, our Lord is ever wont, to diſcover it ; and they do not only hurt themſelves, but also the reſt ; and ſometimes, thoſe poor Creatures haue the leſs fault, because they do but that, which they find in uſe. But ſill, it is matter of much compassion, to ſee many, who haue really a mind, to forſake all, and conceiue, that they go to ſerve our Lord, and to fly from the dangers of this World, do yet, by this means, find themſelves engaged in ten worlds, all together ; where they know not, what to do, or how to help themſelves.

lives. For, youth and sensuality, and, in fine, the Devil, both invites them, and inclines them to follow some things, which do altogether belong to the same World ; and they see them there held for good. Methinks, they are partly like those miserable Hereticks, who will make themselves blind, and give themselves to understand, that those opinions, which they follow, are good, and so come to believe them, to be true ; though yet, upon the matter, they believe them not ; for, in their hearts, there is somewhat, which tells them still, that it is naught.

O great misery ! I say, O extream great misery of Religious persons, (and I speak not here of Women now, more than of Men) where Religious Observance is not kept ; and where, in one, and the self same Monastery, two ways are held : One of Vertue, and Religious Life ; another, a deficiency from it ; and all goes as it were, equally, hand in hand. Or rather, I said ill, when I said, equally ; for it uses to happen so, for our Sins, that the more imperfect, make up the greater number ; and so, as they use to be more, they use to be also more favoured. And true Religious Observance is wont to be so rare, in those places, that as well that Religious man, as that Religious woman, who shall have a mind, to give themselves wholly, and in good earnest, to follow their Vocation, and Rule, will have cause, to be in more fear of the rest of the Religious of their own House, than of all the Devils in Hell. Yea, and they will need to use more caution, and dissimulation, in speaking of that intercourse, and friendship, which such persons should procure to hold, with God, than of any other inclinations, and friendships, which the Devil finds means, sometimes, to bring into Monasteries. I therefore know no reason, why we should be amazed, to see so many miseries in the Church, since they, who ought to be Patterns for others, (that so, all Men might grow to be vertuous, by their example) have totally blotted out, that Work, which the Spirit of the Saints, in old time, left registered in our Religious Orders. And I humbly beseech his Divine Majesty, that he will be pleased, to give such remedy, to these mischiefs, as he knows best, to be needful. *Amen.*

But, in the mean time, when I began to use such conversations as these, I little thought, that so great distraction, and other damages, would grow to my Soul, by such kind of acquaintances, when I saw, they were so much used by others ; and I conceived, that so general a thing, as it is, to make Visits in many Monasteries, would be of no greater prejudice to me, than it was to others, whom I saw, to be vertuous, and good. But I considered not, the while, that those others, were much more vertuous, than my self ; and that those things, which were of much danger

danger to me, were not, perhaps, of so very much to them ; though yet, I fear, it be of some ; and, at the best, I am sure enough, that it is no better, than time very ill employed, and spent. And, being once with a certain person, our Lord was pleased to give me to understand, in the very beginning of our acquaintance, that such friendships would be, no way convenient for me ; and to give me also advise, and light, in so great a darknes, as that was. For, Christ our Lord represented himself before me, with much rigour, and gave me well to understand, how greatly he was disgusted at my proceeding. I saw him only, with the eyes of my Soul ; but yet, much more distinctly, and more clearly, than I could possibly have done, with the eyes of my Body ; and he remained so deeply imprinted there, that although it hapned to me, above six and twenty years ago, me-thinks, he is still as present to me now, as he was then ; But I am sure, I remained so altered, yea and so astonished, that I intended to see that Person no more.

It did me a great deal of hurt, that I knew not, at that time, that it was possible for one to see any thing, but with the eyes of the Body ; and the Devil was careful enough, to continue me, in that erroneous opinion, and to make me still believe, that it was impossible ; and therefore, that I had but fancied certain things, to my self ; and that, perhaps, it might be a work of the Devil. And he brought many suggestions, like this, upon me ; though yet still, I were very confidently of opinion, that it was God, and no conceit, or fancy, at all ; but yet still, because it induced me to do things, which were against my gust, I did the best I could, even to lye to my self. And forasmuch, as I durst not confer with any body, about this particular, and found my self also extreamly importuned to it, being assured, that it could not be ill done, to see such a Person as that, and that there would be no loss, but rather gain, of honour by it, I returned to the same conversation ; yea, and also, at other times, in like manner, to others ; for they were many years, wherein I took this pestilential recreation ; and when once, I was far embarked therein, it seemed not to me, to be so very ill, as indeed, it was ; though still, it be very true, that sometimes I discerned clearly enough, that it wa; not good. But yet, no other conversation distract-ed me so much, as this,in particular,did ; by reason of the great affecti-on, which I bore to the party.

But, my self being afterwards again, with the same person, we, both of us, saw coming towards us (and there were others, also present, who saw it too) a certain thing, in the shape of a great Toad ; which passed on, with much more speed, than such Creatures use to do. For

my part, I was not able to conceive, how such a filthy Beast as that, should get into that Room, through that part, from whence it came ; and even, at Noon-day ; nor had ever any such thing, been seen there. The effect, which it wrought in me, seems, not to have been void, of some mystery ; and this also, was a thing, which I could never forget. But, O greatness of God ! with how much care, and pity, didst thou admonish me, in so many kinds, and by so many ways ; and how little did I permit, that all these warnings should help me ?

There was also there, a certain Religious Woman of my kindred ; ancient, and a great servant of God, and of much devotion. She also, would sometimes, be giving me good counsel ; but I did not only not believe her, but was also disgusted with her ; as conceiving, that she took offence at me, without cause.

And this I here relate, to the end, that both my wickedness, and the great goodness of Almighty God, may be the better understood ; and that it may be known, how well I deserved Hell, for my great ingratitude ; and I do it also, to this end, that if our Lord may so ordain, and be pleased, that any Religious Woman may read this Discourse, they may be careful, to take warning by me ; and I beg of them, that, for the love of our Lord, they will take heed of such recreations, as these. And I beseech his Divine Majesty, that some one of them, may be disabused, whom I have deceived, when I told them, that it was not ill ; and when (being in such blindness, at that time) I assured them, that there was no danger in it at all ; and in regard also, that, by the ill example, which I gave them, (as I have related here) I was a cause to them, of great mischief, whilst yet I thought not, that I did them so much hurt ; and had no design at all, to deceive them.

But now, even whilst I was yet much indisposed, in those first days ; before I knew how to help my self, I grew into an extream desire, to do others good ; which is a very ordinary temptation for new beginners ; though, it hapned to succeed well with me. And considering how dearly I loved my Father, I wished him the self same benefit, which I conceived my self to have gained, by means of Mental Prayer ; and esteeming, that, in this life, there was no greater blessing, than to obtain, and enjoy that gift, I began by certain ways of discourse, to procure, the best I could, that he woulde endeavour to obtain it ; and I gave him certain Books, for this purpose. Now, he, being a Man of so much virtue, as I have already declared, settled himself, so very well, in this exercise, that he came, within five or six years, (for so long, I think, it was) to be so well improved, and advanced therein, that I
blessed

blessed our Lord much, for the favour ; and it gave me an extremal consolation. The troubles, and crosses, which he endured, were very great, and of many kinds ; and he passed through them all, with much conformity, to the will of our Lord. He came to see me often ; and was greatly comforted, to treat of Spiritual things. And when now I lived so distracted, without using Mental Prayer, and saw withal, that he conceived me to be still the very same that I had been before, I was not able to endure, without undeceiving him ; for I had then been a year, and more, without Mental Prayer, as thinking it more humility for me to abstain ; and this (as I shall declare afterwards) was the greatest, and worst temptation, that ever I had ; for, by this means, I ran headlong upon my total ruine ; whereas, when I frequented Prayer, if I offended God, one day, I returned to recollect myself on another ; and so, to remove further from the occasion.

But that blessed man, my Father, coming to see me in such state as this, it was too much for me to see him so far deceived, as to think, that I still conversed with God, as formerly I had done ; and so I told him then, that I did no longer use Mental Prayer ; though yet, I did not tell him, the cause thereof ; but I alledged my infirmities, for the reason. For, although I were recovered of the main sickness, I had yet deseases, yea, and very great ones still ; and although, of late, they have not assaulted me, with so very great fiercenes, as before, yet, they faile not, still to continue, and to exercise me also, in many kinds. In particular, I had certain vomitings, for twenty years together, every morning, in such sort, as that I could never brake my fast, till Noon was past ; yea, and some times not so soon. But since, of late, I use to receive the B. Sacrament more often, I have those vomitings at night, before I goe to bed, with much more paine ; which I take to procure them by the use of feathers, and such other things ; because, if I have them not, the sickness, which I feel, is extremal. But indeed, I am, methinks, almost never without many kinds of paine ; and somtimes, they are very sharp ones, and especially, at my heart ; though yet withal, it be also true, that the violent Palsie, and other infirmities of Calentures which were wont to come very thick upon me, are now found, to oppres me more seldom ; so that many times, I am well, in those respects ; and I have made so little account of these miseries, for these eight years together, that sometimes I am even glad, I have them ; as conceiving, that our Lord may be, peradventure, served, in some sort, thereby : my Father believed me, that this was the cause of my omission ; for, himself never used to lie ; and considering, of what matter, I was then discours-

sing to him, he had no reason to think, but that I said true; and, to the end, that he might believe me the better, I told him also then, though I well saw my self, not to be excused thereby that I had enough to do, to be able to assist in the Quire; though yet, in very deed, even this reason of corporal sickness, was no sufficient cause, to make me give any good thing over; for, there is no need of corporal strength, for such things as these, but only of love, and custom; since our Lord affords us always, some opportunity, if we will, our selves. I say, alwayes; because, though infirmities, and other occasions, may hinder one sometimes, from spending many hours in Solitude, yet there will not want some other time, wherein we may have health enough, for this busyness; yea, and even in other occasions, as also in the midst of sickness it self, the truest Prayer may be made (since it is the Soul which loves) by offering up such pain, to Almighty God; and in rememb'ring, for whom it is endured; and in conforning ones self, to God's holy will, therein; and in a thousand such other things, as will occur. And thus may one exercise Love; for, there is no necessity at all, for a person, either to be in Solitude, or else, that there must be no Prayer at all.

If we will take a little care, we may arrive to obtain great blessings at those times, when our Lord even takes time for Prayer from us, by means of our sicknesses and pain; and my self found this to be true, as long as my Conscience was pure and good. But my Father, through the opinion which he held of me, and the love he bare me, believed all that I had said; or rather, not only believed, but also pitied me; though yet, being then grown to find himself in so eminent and high a state of Spiritual Life, he remained not with me very long. And therefore, having visited me, he returned home, as holding his stay there, to be losse of time; and I, who was willing to spend it upon other vanities, was not troubled very much at his departure.

It was not only with him, but with other persons also that I procured, that they should addict themselves to Prayer, even whilst I was walking on in those vanities; for still, as I found them well affected to Vocal Prayer, I told them how they should use Meditation; and I did them good, and gave them Books; for I had still a good desire that others should serve God, even from the very first time that I used Prayer; as I have related here. It seemed to me, that since now I served not our Lord my self, so well as I understood to do it, yet I liked not, that that light should be lost, which his Divine Majesty had bestowed upon me; but that others might serve him by my means. And this I here recount,

that

that so the great blindness wherein I was, may be the better seen; which induced me to make me lose my self, whilst yet I procured to do good to others.

About this time my Father fell into the sickness, whereof he dyed shortly after. But I went to attend and recover him, whilst my self was more sick in Soul, than he was in Body, through many vanities of mine; though yet, not in such sort as that, according to my apprehension, I was in Mortal sin, even in all this worst and wickedest time whereof I speak; for, certainly, if I had conceived so, I should by no means have continued therein. I endured some affliction and trouble in his sickness; and, I think, I also made him some part of a poor amends for the pains which he had taken with me, in mine; for now, being ill enough my self, I yet strained very hard to do him service; and besides, I well considered, that by the only loss of him, all my comfort and delight was to be lost; for it all was shut up only in him. I animated my self also, not to shew him that I was in any pain, and to the continuing, even till he expired, as if I felt no trouble at all; though yet it be very true, that, when I saw him come to be upon the very point, to lose his life, it seemed to me, as if mine own very Soul had then been torn out of my Body; for I loved him much.

It was a thing to make our Lord be highly praised, to see the death which my Father dyed; together with the desire which he also had to dye; and the counsel which he gave us, after he had received *Extreme Unction*; and how he charged us to recommend him to God; and that we should beg mercy of him for his Soul; and that we should serve him ever; and consider, that all this world must come to an end. With tears he also told us, how sad he was at the heart for not having served his Divine Majesty better; That he wished he were some Religious man; I mean, that he had been so; and that of the strictest that were. I hold it for certain, that some fifteen days before, our Lord gave him to understand, that he was not to live; because, before that time, he did not think himself very sick, though he were so. But afterwards, though he seemed to mend much, in point of health, and though the Doctors said so, yet he made no account of that, but only attended to put his Soul in good order.

That sickness of his began with a very grievous pain in his shoulders, which never left him; and sometimes oppressed him so, that his affliction was very great. I told him once upon this occasion, that since he had been so devoted to that Mystery, when our Lord carried his Cross upon his shoulder, he might do well to conceive, that his Divine Majesty had been

been pleased to give him a feeling of some part of that which himself had undergone with so much trouble ; and he was so comforted by this , that I remember not to have heard him complain more . He remained three days with very little shew of understanding ; but yet , the day whereon he dyed , our Lord restored it to him ; and that so entirely , as we were all even amazed to see it ; and so he continued still , saying the *Creed* ; as soon as he had passed through half thereof , he expired . When he was dead , he looked even like an *Angel* ; and as such , he never seemed in my sight to be , that is , in his Soul and disposition , which he had exceedingly good . Nor do I know why I have spoken thus much of him , unless it be to confess and accuse mine own wickednes so much the more ; since , upon the sight of such a death , and the knowledge of such a life , I ought to have amended and reformed mine , if it had been but to grow the liker to such a *Father* . His *Confessor* , who was a *Dominican* , and a great learned man , affirmed , that he made no doubt , but that my Father would go straight to Heaven ; for he , who had Confessed him divers years , spake much of the great purity of his Conscience . This *Dominican Father* , being a very worthy man , and a true Servant of God , did me a great deal of good ; for I Confessed my self to him ; and he undertook the good of my Soul with much diligence ; and to make me well understand the way of perdition , wherein I was walking . He caused me also to Communicate every fifteen days ; and beginning first to treat with him by little and little , I spoke with him afterward , at length , about my Prayer ; and he told me , that I must not fail to use it ; and that it could not by any means but do me good . I began therefore to use it again ; and from that time forward , I never left it ; though yet I did not for the present give over the occasions of my imperfections .

I therefore , in the mean time , passed a most sad life ; for , in Prayer , I came to understand my faults . On the one side , I was called by God ; and on the other , I followed the World . All those things which belonged to God , gave me great contentment ; but those things wh ch were of the World , held me in chaines ; and , it seems , I had a mind to reconcile these two contraries , which are so much at enmity with one another ; namely , a Spiritual life on the one side ; and sensual joyes , delights , and pastimes on the other .

In my Prayer I endured much trouble , because now my Spirit was not Master , but a Slave ; and therefore I was not able to shut my self up in my heart (which was the only way of proceeding , I formerly had held , in my Prayer) without shutting up a thousand vanities together with me . I passed so many years in this manner , that now I am astonished to consider

sider that any person should be able to endure the not leaving either the one or the other in so long a time. I well know, that now, it was no longer in my hand, to give over Prayer; for he held me now in his, who resolved to do me greater favours. O that I could declare the occasions of doing ill, which God removed from me in those years; and how I put my self again into them; and of the danger wherein I was to lose wholly my reputation, from which he freed me; had I made to discover by my actions what kind of Creature I was; and He, to cover these faults, and to discover some little virtue of mine, if there were any; and to make the same seem great in the eyes of all men; in such sort, as that they ever held me in much account. For, though sometimes, my vanities would shine through my actions, yet they seeing other things in me, which appeared good, would not believe the ill. But the true cause hereof, was, that the knower of all things saw that this was fit to be so ordained, to the end, that when afterward I should come to perswade any to do him service, they might give me some little credit therein. And that Sovereign Bounty of God, did not so much consider my great sins, as it did those desires which I had sometimes to serve him; and the great trouble I felt in my self, for wanting power and strength to put the same in execution.

But, O thou Lord of my Soul! and how shall I ever be able to express, with fulness and clearness enough, the favours which thou shewedst me in those years? and how, in that very time, when I was offending thee most, thou madest such hast to dispose my Soul to a most profound remorse and sorrow; that so I might come to tast of thy regalo's and great favours again? The truth is, O my King, that thou didst use the most curious and sharp kind of punishment, which could possibly (to my thinking) be found for me; as one, who didst well understand, what would prove most afflictive to me: with great regalo's, didst thou punish my faults. And I think it is no impertinency which I utter; though yet it were a kind of reason that I should utter nothing else when I renew the memory of my ingratitude and wickednes towards thee. But really, it was so much more painful, and insupportable for me to receive such favours upon the very nick of my having fallen into so great offences, than it would have been to endure punishments; that some one of those said favours so received, seems clearly to have even defeated, and confounded, and wearied me more than many infirmities and other afflictions put together. For, as for these latter, I found, that I deserved them well; and I thought, made some satisfaction for my sins; though all were but little for my many offences. But now, to see my self receiv-

ing afresh so high favours, whilst I made so ill retribution for those received before, is, in my account, a kind of terrible torment; and I think it will be esteemed so by all such as have any knowldg or love of God; and we may easily find this to be true, even by the natural condition of persons, who are virtuously inclined. Hence proceeded my tears, together with an indignation, to consider what I found in my self; for I saw that still I was upon the point returning to fall again, although my firme purposes and desires did then (*I mean, so long as those favours last-ed*) stand fast and firm.

A great convenience it is for a Soul to find her self solitary, and single, amongst so many dangers; & methinks, that if I had had any Creature, to whom I might have imparted all this, it would have helped me not to fall again; at least for shame of Him, if I had none of God. I would therefore advise them, who use Prayer, and especially at the beginning thereof, to procure some friendship, and familiarity, with others, who have the same designe; for, this is of much importance, though it should be for no more, than to be assisted by the prayers of one another; and how much more, when there are many advantages besides. And, for my part, I cannot tell, why, since by humane conversations, and inclinations (even although they be not excellently good) men procure some friends, with whom to recreate themselves, to take the more of contentment in recounting their vain pleasures to one another, it should be permitted, that such as begin to love and serve God in good earnest, should forbear to impart to some fit persons, both their delights, & their afflictions; since, such as use Prayer, are acquainted with both these. For, if that friendship be in earnest, which one desires to hold with his Divine Majesty, there needs to be no fear of Vain-Glory; and when that Soul should be set upon by any first motion thereof, she would easily get out of it with merit. And, as for me, I believe, that he, who should communicate his prayer to others, with such intention, would both profit himself, and those that hear him; and would prove much bettered, both in his own understanding, and in knowing also how to instruct his friends. He, who should be subject to Vain-Glory, in his speaking upon such an occasion as this, would also not fail to have it in hearing Massie with devotion, when seen by others; and by doing other things also, to which he is yet expressly bound, upon the pain of being otherwise no good Christian, and which must not be forborn, upon the fear of a man's being subject to Vain-Glory. Now, this is a point of so extream importance, for the benefit of all such Souls as are not yet strengthened and established in Virtue (who want not, both so many Adversaries.

versaries, yea and friends also, to incite them to ill) that I know not how to express it sufficiently. And, to me it seems, as if the Devil loved to use this devise, as a thing, which imports him very much; Namely, that men should hide themselves as carefully from making any discovery of it, who procure to love and please God; as he hath earnestly incited others to discover any their dishonest affections. Which latter course, is so much taken and followed, that it passes for a kind of gallantery to talk of them; and so, by this means, they publish the offences which they commit against God.

I know not whether they be impertinencies which I utter; if they be, your Reverence may be pleased to tear them; and if they be not, I beseech you Sir, assist, and instruct my simplicity, by adding much to them upon this subject. For, the busines of the Service of God, goes now so weakly on, that they who serve him, had need support one another; that so, they may be able to march forward; so very much are the vanities and foolish entertainments of the world grown to be in fashion, that there are few eyes in the world to discern their fault: But if any one, on the other side, do but begin to give himself to God, there are so many who will murmur at him, that he shall find himself to have need enough to get company to defend him; till such time as he be strong enough, not to be troubled for what he is put to suffer; otherwise he may, perhaps, see himself in some straits.

This seems to me to have been the reason why some Saints have used to retire themselves into Deserts. Indeed it is a kind of humility, not to put any confidence in ones self, but to believe that God will not fail to help him through their means, with whom he converseth. And thus, Charity, by being communicated, will increase; and there are a thousand other benefits herein; of which I should not adventure to speak, if I had not great experience of the importance hereof. True it is, that I am both the most weak, and the most wicked of any living; but yet still, I am apt to think, that, whosoever humbling himself, though he be strong, will yet, not believe so much of himself, but, in this matter will give belief to another, who is endued with experience, shall never lose any thing by the bargain. Of my self, I am able to say thus much, that if our Lord had not discovered this truth to me, and had not given me means to treat very frequently with such persons as used Prayer, I had still walked on, now falling, now rising, till I had even dropped down headlong into Hell. For, I wanted not many friends who would not fail to help me to fall; but towards the recovering, and raising me up, I found my self so absolutely alone, that now I am no less than amazed,
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consider how I remained not still laid prostrate ; and I praise the mercy of Almighty God ; for, it was he , and only he , who gave me his helping hand . Let him be blessed , and praised , for ever , and for ever , Amen .

C H A P . V I I I .

She treats of the great good it did her, towards the not losing her Soul ; not to have wholly given over her Prayer ; As also what an excellent remedy that is towards the gaining that which is lost. She persuades all persons to use it ; and declares the great benefits thereof ; and although we should afterward leave it , yet , that still , it would prove a great good to have used so great a help for some time .

Mark I Have not without cause , been considering and reflecting upon this life of mine , so long , for , I discern well enough , that no body will have gust to look upon a thing so very wicked ; And so I would be glad that all such persons as should read this Discourse might abhor me ; to see a Soul so pertinacious , and so ungrateful towards him , who had vouchsafed it so great Favours . And I wish I could get leave to declare that multitude of times that I failed of my obligation to God in this number of years ; by reason , that I was not supported by this strong pillar of Prayer . I passed through this tempestuous Sea , almost twenty years between these fallings and risings (though I rose il-favouredly enough , since I returned again so quickly to fall) in this kind of life tending towards perfection ; but yet in so low a way , as that I made no account at all of Venial Sins ; and for such as were Mortal , it is true , that , although I feared them , yet I did not even that as I ought , since I avoided not the dangers thereof ; but I may say , that it is one of the most painful kinds of life that can possibly be imagined . For , I neither enjoyed the sweetnes of God , nor yet the satisfaction of the world . When I found my self in the contentments of the world , the remembrance of what I owed to God , gave me pain ; and whilst I was conversing with his Divine Majesty , the inclinations and affections of the world gave me disquiet . And this is a war so very painful , that I know not how it was possible for me to endure it one moneth , much more for so many years ; notwithstanding that I yet clearly see the great mercy which God shewed me herein (since I dealt so much with the world) that still I should have the courage

rage to give my self the Prayer. I say courage ; for, as for me , I see not what one thing there is of so many , as are to be found in the whole world , wherein there is need of a greater than to treat of committing Treason against a King , and to know , that he knows it well , and yet , never to go out of his presence. For , howsoever it be very true , that we are alwayes in the presence of God ; yet methinks , that they , who converse with him , in Prayer , are in his presence , after a more particular manner ; for they are seeing then , that he sees them ; whereas others may perhaps , remain some dayes in his presence , yet without remebering , that he looks upon them . True it is , that within that time , there were , I believe , many moneths , and somtimes , peradventure , a whole year , that I kept my self from offendng our Lord , and gave my self much to Prayer ; and I also used some , yea and many diligences , that I might never happen more to offend him . And because all that , which I write now , is to be delivered , with intirenes of truth , I declare my self here , as you see : But I remember little , of those good dayes ; and therefore it may be thought , they were few , and the ill ones , many ; yet few dayes passed ; without my allowing a good long time for Prayer , unles I were either very sick , or extreamly busie . The worse I was in my health , the more I was united with God ; and I procured , that such persons , as used to be with me , at those times , might be so too ; and I begged it of our Lord ; and we spake very often , of him . And so , unles it were that one yeare of which I have spoken , of the eight and twenty years , which have passed , since I began first to use Prayer , I have endured this battaile , and strife , of treating both with God and the World , more than eighteen . In those other years , whereof I am yet to speak , the cause of the war was changed , though this latter was not incon siderable ; but , in regard that I continued then , as I conceive , in the service of God , and in a knowledge of the vanity of whatsoever this world can be , it did all , prove delightful , and pleasant ; as I will shew hereafter .

Now , the reason , why I have related all this , is ; First , (as I was saying before) to the end , that the mercy of Almighty God , together with my ingratitude , may be well discerned ; And secondly , that it may be also understood , how great a blessing God doth to that Soul , which he disposes to use Prayer , with a good will ; though yet it should not be so very well disposed for it , as were fit ; for , if he persevere therein , what Sin soever he commit , and whatsoever Temptation be offered , and whatsoever Falls be given him , in a thousand strang fashions , by the Devil , I hold , in fine , for certain , that our Lord will draw him , at length , out

out of the Storm, into the Port of Salvation ; as now, by all appearance, he hath drawn me ; and I humbly beseech his Divine Majesty, that I may never return again, to be lost.

Many holy, and good men, have written of the benefit, which he obtaines, who exercises himself in Prayer ; I meane, Mental Prayer ; and glory be to God, for it ; and if it were not so, though I have little humility, yet am I not withal, so insolent, as that I would presume to speake upon this subject. But of that, whereof I have some experience, I may yet say some-what ; and it is this ; That, whatsoever hath begun to frequent the use of Prayer, I wish him, not to give it over, whatsoever sins he commit in the mean-time ; since this is the means, by which he may recover himself again ; which he will find to be of much more difficulty, without it. And let not the Devil tempt him to leave it, as he did me, upon a pretence of humility ; but let him firmly believe, that his words can never want truth. That, if we will repaire our selves in good earnest, and resolve to offend the Divine Majestie no more, he restores us to the same friendship, which we had before, with him ; and doth us the same favours, which he did us before ; and some-times, they prove to be much greater, if the repentance deserve it. And who-soever hath not yet begun this exercise, I beseech him, for the love of our Lord, that he will no longer deprive himself, of so great a benefit.

There is nothing, to be feared here ; but much, to be desired. For, though a man should not proceed so far, as to strive to gain such perfection, as may prepare, and, as it were, deserve those gifts, and regalo's, which God is wont to give to such persons ; yet the least, which he shall get, will be, that he shall proceed in understanding the way to Heaven. And I truft in the mercy of God, that no body ever took him for a friend, whom he did not well requite, for his paines, if he persevered. For, Mental Prayer, is no other thing, in my opinion, than a Treaty, about making friendship with God ; and a frequent, and private Commerce, with him ; by whom, we know, we are beloved. And, as for you, if you love him not yet, (for, to the end, that it may be a true love, and that your friendship may last, the conditions must be reciprocall ; and we know, there can be no want on our Lords behalfe ; and that our nature is vitious, sensual, and ungrateful) yet considering how much it imports you to hold friendship with him, and how much he loves you, ye must passe on, through this pain, to be much in his company, who is of so different a condition from yours.

Mark

*Mental
Prayer*

O infinite goodness of my God ! how true it is, that, methinks, I see, both thee and my self in this very manner ? O thou , who art the very joy of the Angels in Heaven ! how fain would I, when I see, and consider these things , even defeat, and dissolve my self totally in loving thee? An i how certain a thing it is , that thou sufferest them , who will not suffer thee so as to remain with them ? O how good a friend dost thou make thy self, O my Lord ; and how dost thou go regaling him, and enduring him ? And expecting till he make himself grow to be of thy condition ; and, in the mean time, endurest him to be of his own; and thou takest, O my dear Lord , by way of good payment , those portions of time which he can be content to bestow upon thee ; and upon a minute of true sorrow and repentance thou forgettest all those sins whereby he hath offended thee. All this have I perceived clearly in order to my self ; and for my part , I cannot see , O my Creator , how the whole world can forbear to procure to draw near to thy Divine Majesty ; that so it may be able to obtain this particular kind of friendship with thee. Such as are wicked, and are not hitherto come to have the like dispositions to thine , should yet come to thee ; that thou mightest make them good ; and that they might endure thee to be with them, though it were but for some two hours in the day ; yea, even though they do not, the while, stay in thy company, without a thousand distractions and roulings in worldly cares & thoughts ; as I was wont to do. And, for recompence of this violence which they use aga'nt themselves , to continue in so good company as thine, (for neither in the beginnings, nor even afterwards also, for a while, can they do any more) thou forcest, O Lord, the Devils to forbear assaulting them; & permittest them, to have daily, less power than other against them; yea, and thou yieldest these evil Spirits to be conquered by them. So that thou, O thou Life of all lives, dost never kill any of those who put their confidence in thee; nor of them, who desire thee for a Friend ; but thou sustaineft both the life of their Bodies , with increase of health ; and thou also dost impart it to the Soul. For my part , I cannot possibly understand why men shoud fear, as they do, to begin to use Mental Prayer ; nor of what it is, in fine, that they are afraid. The Devil, indeed, doth endeavour to set himself to do us a real mischief , if, by I know not what fears he can make me forbear the considering, wherein I have offended God ; and how much I owe him ; that there is a Hell ; and Glory ; and to think on those great afflictions , and pains our Lord endured for me. This was all my Prayer, whilst I continued in all those dangers ; and thus did I meditate whensoever I was able. And very often, yea and for some years together , I was more busied about meditation

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bout desiring that the hour resolved to be spent in Prayer might come quickly to an end, still listning when the Clock would strike ; than upon better things. Yea, and it happened to me many times, that I knew not what Pennance could be set before me, so very great, as that I would not more willingly undergoe it, than recollect my self to Prayer. And it is certain, that either the Devil did set upon me with such an un-resistable force, or else mine own wicked custom, that I might not go to Prayer ; and the sadness of my heart was such, even when I entered into my Oratory for that purpose, that I was fain to help my self with all the strength and courage I had, (which, they say, is not very little ; and it hath been seen that God hath given me more than is usually possessed by women, but that I have employed it ill) to force my self to make my Prayer ; and in fine, it pleased our Lord to assit me. But afterward, when I had used these violences to my self, I found my self with more quiet and delight ; so that, sometimes I grew to have an express desire to pray.

Now, therefore, since our Lord did suffer and endure so wicked a Creature as my self so long a time ; and it appears plainly, that all my miseries were redressed by this means ; what person, how wicked soever, can find any thing to be afraid of ? For, how wicked soever any other body may have been, yet he will never be so, after the enjoying of so great Favours from our *B. Lord* as I had received. And who can ever come to dis-confide in his Divine Majesty, who had patience with me, so long, upon this only reaon, because I desired and pro cured some tim: and place wherein he might be with me ? And even this little thing I did often, without any inclination of mine own, but only by the great violence which either I offered to my self, or else was offered to me by our Lord.

Since therefore the use of Prayer is so fit ; yea and so very necessary, even for such as serve not God, but offend him ; and since no body can truly find any such hurt, which it can possibly do, as would not be much greater without Prayer ; at least, how can such forbear it, as serve God, and desire to serve him ? Most certainly, unleſ a man have a mind to pass through the troubles and miseries of this life with an addition of more misery, and to shut up the very gate against God himself, for fear, lest he should give him comfort by this means, I cannot possibly understand this proceeding of his. I have, really, great compassion for those poor Souls who thus will needs serve God upon their own cost ; for, as for them, who use Prayer, our Lord himself bears their charges ; since, for so little paines they take, he gives them so much gust , that they may

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the better be able to endure the taking of that pains in his company. Of these gusts, which our Lord is pleased to give to such as persevere in the exercise of Prayer, there shall be more discourse hereafter; I will not make it hear. Only this, I will be bold to say, that, of all those so great favours which it ever pleased our Lord to do me, the very Gate was Prayer; and if that come once to be shut, I know not how God shall do us favours. For, though he should have a mind to enter into a Soul, to regale both himself and it, there is no means by which to do it; since he must have it alone; and clear, and with a desire to receive such favours. And if our selves, on the other side, bring many impediments, and take no course to remove them, how shall we ever think he can come to us; and how can we conceive that he will bestow on us any great rewards.

Now, to the end that his mercy may be seen, and the great benefit which it was for me, not to have given over Praying and Reading, I will here declare (since the understanding of it importeth so much) what battery the Devil raises against a Soul to gain it; and what diligences, and, as it were, art and mercy is used by our Lord, for procuring to reduce it to himself; that so, others may preserve themselves from those dangers from which I kept not my self. And, above all things, I humbly desire them for that great love wherewith our Lord goes endeavouring to win us back again to himself, that they will keep themselves carefully out of the occasions of Sin; for, when once we are engag'd therein, there is no ground of trust, or confidence where we are encountr'd and assaulted by so many enemies, and are subject to such weaknesses which disable us to make any defence. I would fain be able here to make a draught of that captivity, wherein my Soul was in those daies; for I well understood my self to be in captivity; and yet I could not tell very well to what I was a Slave; nor could I entirely believe that that which my Confessors thought fit to aggravate no more, was so very ill, as yet I found it. A certain person told me, when I went to him once with a scruple, that, although I were in a state of using high Contemplation, yet such occasions and conversations were of no inconvenience to me. This hapned to me towards the latter end, when I, by the favour of God went separating my self more and more from great dangers; but yet did not wholly avoid the occasions. When they observed me with good desires, and the exercise of Prayer, they thought I did much; but, my Soul understood well enough, that it was not to perform that whereto I was obliged for one, to whom I owed so much. I have now both pity and grief to consider how much my Soul suffered at that time; and the little help it received from any but God; and the great indulgence which they

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gave me for my pastimes, and contentments, by making me believe that they were lawfull.

But now the torment which I had by hearing Sermons, was not little; for I had a great affection to hear them; in such sort, that if I saw any man preach with the spirit, and very well, I carried a most particular affection to him; and that without any endeavour of mine; nor do I know how I came to have it. Me-thought no Sermon seemed so ill to me, which I could not gladly hear; though others would be of opinion that he preached not well; but then, if the Sermon were very good, it gave me a particular satisfaction. To speak of God, or hear him spoken of, did, in effect, never weary me; I mean, after I had once begun to use Prayer. Yet, as on the one side I was much comforted with hearing Sermons, so on the other, they tormented me, because I understood thereby, that I was not, by many degrees, such, as I ought, to have been. I humbly begged of our Lord, that he would help me; but I believe (by what I can now conjecture) that I was wanting in the placing all my confidence in his Divine Majesty, and totally disconfiding in my self. I sought for remedy, and I used many diligences; but I understood not that all is good for nothing, unless first we strip our selves entirely of all confidence in our selves, and lodge it all upon God. I desired to live a true life; for then I understood well enough, that, indeed I did not live; but fought with a shaddow of death. And there was no body who would give me life; and, as for me, I was not able to take it; and he, who was only able to give it, had no reason to bring me this succour; since he, having reduced me to himself so very often, I had yet forsaken him.

CHAP. IX.

She declares by what meanes our Lord began to awake her Soul, and gave her light in so great darkness; and to strengthen also her Vertues, that so she might offend him no more.

But now my Soul was already grown to be very weary; and yet, the ill-habits which I had gotten, would not permit her, though she desired it, to take any repose. It hapned to me one day, upon my going into the Oratory, that I saw a Picture which had been brought in thither, to be kept; for they had borrowed it to serve for a certain Festivity,

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which was to be celebrated in the House, about that time. The Picture was of Christ our Lord very full of wounds, and it was so devoutly made, that, when I looked upon it, it moyed me much; for it represented exceeding well, what he endured for us. And the sence of the little gratitude to our Lord, which I had expressed, for those wounds of his, was such, that me thought, my very heart, did even split. And I cast my self down, near the Picture, with a great shoure of tears, beseeching our Lord humbly, and earnestly, that he would strengthen me so farr, once for all; as that, at length, I might offend him no more.

I was, besides, very much devoted, to the glorious S. Mary Magdalene; and I thought much, and often, of her Conversion; and especially, whensoever I recived the B. Sacrament. For, knowing, at that time, that our Lord was most certainly in my very bosome, I placed my self at his feet, as conceiving, that my tears would not be despised by him. I know not very well, what I said; but yet I know, that he, who was pleased, that I should shed those tears, did shew me favour enough, for his part; since I forgot the sence, and tenderness thereof, so soon after. And then also I recommended my self, to that glorious Saint, that she might help me, to obtain pardon of my Sins. But I conceive, that I profited more, in this last time, when I prayed before the Picture; because then, I was grown into very great distrust of my self; and placed all my confidence, in God. To my thinking, I told him then, that I would never rise from thence, till he granted me, the humble Suite, which I had made; and I am fully of opinion, that it did me good; for, I have gone improving much, ever since that time.

Now I continued to hold this manner of Prayer; because, not being able to discourse with my Understanding, I procured to represent Christ, within me, and I ever also found, it to prove better with me, in my opinion, when I conceived my self, to finde him all alone. For, he being alone, and so much afflicted, me thought, he was to admit me, as a person, who was in necessity, and misery. Of this kind of Simplicites, I had many; and in particular, I used to find my self especially well, in the Prayer of the Garden; and I delighted to accompany him there. I thought also much, upon that Sweat, together with the great affliction, which he sustained then; and I desired, to wipe off that most painful Sweat, from his face; but I remember, how, in fine, I never durst resolve, to presume to do it; so grievously did my Sins represent themselves to me. Howsoever, I remained there, by him, as well as my thoughts would give me leave; but, the truth is, I had store of such, as tormented me. Most nights, during many yeares, before I went to rest, and when I was

recommending my self to God; ere I slepe, I ever thought a little, upon this passage, of his Prayer in the Garden; and that, even before I was a Religious woman; for, they told me, that I might gain many indulgences by it; and, at least, I am of opinion, that my Soule got much, by this meanes; because thus, I began to use Prayer, even without exprely knowing, what it was; and then, it was as usual for me, not to omit this custome, as not to faile of blessing my self, with the Signe of the Croſs, before sleep.

But, to return to what I was saying, of the torment, which my thoughts were wont to give me. This manner of proceeding, without discourse of the Understanding, hath this in it, That the Soul must either gain much, or lose much; I mean, lose, as to consider; consideration, and discourse but in their profitting, they profit much, who use it, since all such Prayer, is Love. But, to arrive to this point, it will cost one a great deal of paines, except such, as our Lord vouchſafes to conduct, in a short time, to Prayer; of Quiet of which ſort, I know ſome; and for them, who go by this way, it will be good to have ſome Book, or other, at hand, that ſo they may recollect themſelves quickly. As for me, it did me also good, to look upon Fields, or Flowers, or Waters; for, in theſe things, did I find the memory of our Creator, as I alſo did, in mine own ingratitude, and Sins; all which particulars, were wont to awake me, and recollect me, and to ſerve me, in stead of a Book; for, as for things of Heaven, and ſuch high matters, My understanding was ſo dull, that I could never (I ſay, never) be able to have, or frame any imagination, or fancy, concerning them, till our Lord by an other way repreſented them to me. And I had ſo very little ability, to repreſent things to my mind, by way of the Understanding, that my Imagination ſerved me not, to work upon any thing, but only what I ſaw with mine eyes; which yet others are able to do, who know, how to form certain representations of things to themſelves, upon which they can recollect their thoughts.

For my part, I could only think upon Christ our Lord, as man; but ſo it is, that how much foever I read of his Beauty, or ſaw his Pictures, yet could I never repreſent him, to my ſelf, but just ſo, as one, who is either in the dark, or blind, who though he ſpeaks with another, and ſo know, that he is by him because he is ſure, that the ſaid person is there; yet in fine, he doth but understand, and believe him, to be there, he ſees him not; and in this ſort, did it happen to me, when I thought of our Lord.

Upon this reason was I ſo great a friend, to Images or holy Pictures.

Miserable they, who through their own fault lose this benefit. Well it appears, that they do not love our Lord; for if they loved him, they would be glad to see his Picture; as here it gives us contentment to see the Pictures of those persons whom we love.

About this time, they gave me the *Confessions* of S. *Augustine*; and, it seems, our Lord did so ordain it; for, neither did I procure them, nor had I ever seen them. I bare a very great affection to this Saint, because the Monastery where I lived a secular was of his *Order*; and besides, in regard, that he had been a Sinner; for I alwaies found particular comfort in those Saints, who, after having been Sinners, were converted to our Lord; as conceiving that I should have help by their means; and that our Lord might also be induced to forgive me, as he had done them. Save only, that I was discomfited by this consideration, (as I have said before) that our Lord called them but once, and they returned not to fall from him any more; but, as for me, I had fallen so often, that it afflicted me to the very heart. But yet still, when I considered in him the love he bore me, I grew to be encouraged again; for I never was distrustful of his mercy, though I doubted of my self very often.

O my God! how doth that obstinate stiffness amaze me, to which my Soul was subject, whilst it received so many helps at thy hand; and all in vain! And it strikes me with much fear, to consider, how little I was able to win upon my self all that while; and, how I remained still bound up from resolving to give my self wholly to thee. But, when once I began to read the said *Confessions*, me thought, that *Cæs*, which had been his, was also now directly mine own; and I recommended my self much to that glorious *Saint*. But, when I came afterward to his *Conversion*, and read how he heard that Voice in the *Garden*, it was, to my thinking, as if our Lord had made it to be uttered for me; so quick was that sense which I had thereof in my heart; and I was for a great while even dissolved as it were in tears, & felt a great affliction & vexation. Good God! How much doth a Soul suffer, & what torments doth it endure after the losing of her liberty, whilst she was created and ordained to be the Lady of her self, and to command! For my part, I wonder how I could be able to endure so great torments. But blessed be God, who gave me life, till I might get out of that so deadly a death. Me thought my Soul obtained great strength from the Divine Majesty, and that he ought to hear my Out-cryes, and have compassion of my so many tears.

Upon this, my affection to spend more time with him, began to increase; and to withdraw my self also out of the way of ill occasions, for

when they once were gone, I began to love his Divine Majesty. At least, I thought I understood my self then to love him ; but the truth is, that I understood not as I ought to have understood, in what the true love of God did consist : To the best that I am able to judge, I did even scarce make an end, of disposing my self finally to resolve to serve him, when his Divine Majesty began already to vouchsafe me new Favours. And it seems, that, what others do endeavour to get, with much labour, our Lord was fain to find means to make me content to accept ; which was in these latter years to delight and regale me in great measure. I never presumed to desire that he would give me so much, or any tenderness of devotion ; but I only beg'd that he would give me Grace, that I might not offend him, and allow me pardon for my sins already committed ; But, I seeing, how great they were, durst never advisedly desire any regalo's, or spiritual delights at his hands ; for, me-thought he shewed me pity enough, (and it was really a very eminent mercy) to consent to my appearance before Him, and to draw me to his presence ; considering how well I knew, that, if himself had not procured it, I should never have come. Only once in my whole life, I remember, that, whilst I was in great dryness of Devotion, I desired him to give me some little spiritual gust ; but as soon as I reflected upon what I had done, I remained so full of confusion for it, that the only vexation I had, to see my self with so little humility, obtained for me that which I had presumed to beg.

I was not ignorant that it was no unlawful thing to desire it ; but I conceived that this was true, for them, who are well disposed to receive it by their having procured true devotion with all their power ; which consists in not offending God, and in being inclined and resolved to do all that which is good. And me-thought those tears of mine were but faint and womanish tears, and without any force ; since I obtained not that by them which I desired ; though yet, upon the whole matter, I also believe, that they were useful to me, as I have said. For, in particular, after those two several times, of that so great compunction and sorrow of heart which I had, I began to give my self more to Prayer, and to interest my self less in such things as might do me hurt ; though yet I did not utterly give them over ; but God (as I was saying) went helping me to withdraw my self out of those dangers. For, his Divine Majesty did but expect some preparation or disposition in me, that so, his Spiritual Favours might grow on in such sort as I shall relate ; our Lord being not accustomed to grant them, but to such as keep their Consciences in more purity than mine had formerly possessed.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

She begins to declare the Favours which our Lord did her in Prayer ; and speaks of that wherein we may be able to help our selves ; And how much it also imports us to understand the said Favours which our Lord is pleased to do us. She humbly desires of Him, to whom she sends this account of her self, that, whatsoever she shall declare from hence forward, may remain in secret with him, since he had commanded her to set down in so particular a manner the Favours which our Lord was pleased to do her.

I enjoyed sometimes (as I said) some beginnings of that which I shall now declare ; though it used to pass away very quickly. It fell out in this representation which I made, to placem^y self near to Christ, yea, and * *It works* sometimes also when I was reading ; that there would come suddenly upon me, without either expectation or any preparation on my part, such an evident feeling of the * presence of God, as that I could by no means doubt, but that either he was within me, or else I, all ingulfed in D^r- him. This was not in the manner of a Vision, but I think they call it course, a *Mystical Theology* ; and it suspends the Soul in such sort, that she seems making Infer- to be wholly out of her self. The Will is in act of loving ; the Memory eces ; be seems to me, to be, in a manner lost ; the Understanding in my opinion yet it discourses not ; and although it be not lost, yet it works not as I was no^t by saying, but remains as it were amazed to consider how much it under- way of stands ; though yet it pleases God, that it understand it self also not to Contem- understand fully any part of that which his Divine Majesty reprelents to plation, and Ad- it. Before this time, I used to find most usually a tenderness or sweet- miration ness, which I think may in some part be procured ; and it is a regalo, of the which is neither wholly sensual, nor wholly spiritual ; but it is wholly the gift and blessing of God ; and it seems, that we may greatly help to- wards the obtaining this for our selves, by considering our own base- ness, and the ingratitude which we use towards God ; how much He did for us ; his Passion and grievous Torments ; his whole Life, so full of affliction ; by delighting our selves in beholding his Works and his Greatnes^s ; and how much he loves us ; and many other such things as these ; which, whosoever shall have care to profit, will light on many *for it*, *whose* *creati-* *is causa-* *under-* times ; though he have just then no particular design such way. And if stand- in.

in these reflections, the party be possessed and seized with any love of God, the Soul is all regaled; the heart is full of tenderness and relenting; and tears also abound; which sometimes we seem to have strained as it were by force; other times our Lord seems to give them, because we are not able to resist them.

Now, it seems, that his Divine Majesty is pleased to pay us here for the little poor care we take to serve him, with so high a gift, as that comfort is, which he bestowes upon a Soul, to see her self able to lament and weep for so great a Lord. And I wonder not a whit at this; for, methinks she hath reason enough to receive joy and comfort upon this occasion: Here let her rejoice, here regale her self. I like that Comparison well which offers it self to me now, That these joyes of Prayer should be somewhat like those others which are in Heaven. For, as they see no more there than God is pleased they shall see, according to their deserts; so they acknowledging how small those deserts are every one of them, is highly well content with the place wherein he is; though yet, there be an excessive difference between the joyes of some, and of others in Heaven; yea much more than there is between some spiritual joyes and others here on earth; which yet is very great. And really, a Soul, when God doth her this Favour at first, is very apt to think that there remains no more, then, to be desired; and she esteems her self then to be abundantly satisfied for all the service which ever she was able to pay to God; and I find, that she hath, at least, reason enough to think so. For, even one of those single tears (which yet we may, after a sort procure in some part even of our selves; though still, without the favour of God, we can do nothing at all) cannot be payd for, and purchased in my opinion, with all the labours and troubles of the world. For, a Soul gains much by them; and indeed, what greater gain can possibly any Creature acquire, than to have some kind of testimony that she is pleasing to God.

So that, let him, whosoever shall arrive to this point, praise God very much, and acknowledg himself to be exceedingly in his Debt; for, already there is great likelihood, that his Divine Majesty designs such a person for his service in his own House; and hath chosen him for his Kingdome, if he do not turn back from him any more. And, let us not care for certain Humilities which be in the world, whereof I intend to treat, that some will needs esteem it to be Humility, not to understand those Gifts which our Lord bestows upon them. But let us well understand how the Case stands; Namely, that God bestows them upon us without any merit at all of ours; and let us be thankful to his Divine

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Majesty for them : For, if we know not what we receive, we shall not stir our selves up to love him as we ought. For it is a most-certain truth, that the more we find that we are rich (knowing first, that of our selves we are poor) so much the more we grow to profit; yea and even our Humility will prove to be more entire and sincere. That other course, serves but to accowardize the mind, and to make it hold it self uncapable of receiving great benefits, if our Lord, beginning once to bestow them, it shall also begin to fright it self by a fear of Vain Glory. But let us rather believe, that he, who doth us so great Favours, will give us also grace, that, if the Devil tempt us upon these occasions, we shall perceive him ; and strength to resist him ; I mean, if we go on with plaineness, and sincerity, as in the sight of God, pretending ever to content him only, without respect of men. For, it is an evident truth, that we love a person the better, when we call much to mind what benefits we have received at his hands. And, if it be both lawfull and meritorious for us, to be ever keeping in memory that we have our very Being from God; and that he treated us of nothing ; and that he upholds us still ; together with all those other benefits of his Passion and Death, which he endured for every one of us, who are now alive, long before we were born ; why should it not be also lawful for me to understand, and see, and consider these things often, who was wont to treat of nothing but vanities ; now our Lord hath given me the grace, not willingly to speak of any thing but of him. And now, behold here a rich Jewel, which (remembering that it is bestowed upon us, and that already we are in possession thereof) invites, and even obliges us to love ; And all this, in fine is the good of Prayer, grounded upon Humility.

But What will then occur, when they shall find that other more precious Jewels are in their power and possession, which our Lord imparts to some of his Servants; as namely, a profound contempt of the world, and of themselves ? It is clear, that, in this case, we must hold our selves for deeper debtors, and more obliged to serve him ; and to understand that of our selves we had no part of this Treasure at all ; and to know the great bounty of our Lord, who, to a Soul so wicked, and so absolutely without all merit as mine (for which, the first of those Jewels aforesaid, was not only sufficient, but, by much, too great) would yet needs load me still, with greater riches than I could even tell how to desire. We must in such cases as these, procure to get new strength wherewith to serye him ; and by no means to be ungrateful; for, our Lord gives them ever upon this condition, that, if we use not well that treasure and high place, wherein he puts us, he will strip us of them again ; and, as for our

our parts, we shall come to be much more poor than ever ; and so his Divine Majesty will dispense his Jewels to such others as he shall think fit ; and who may benefit both themselves and others by the good use thereof.

But now , how shall that man increase his own stock , and liberally spend thereof upon others, who is not come so far as to know that himself is rich ? It is in my opinion , an impossible thing (considering the grounds of Humane Nature) for one to do great and goodly things, if he understand not himself to be favoured by God ; for, we are so miserable Creatures, and so inclined to delight in things of this world, that we can hardly abhor , effectually , all that which here we enjoy (and that with great liberty of Spirit) if we understand not our selves, to have some kind of pawn concerning Heavenly things ; for, by means of such blessings as these, doth our Lord impart that Fortitude to us which we lost by our sins. And he should but ill desire that all men should despise and abhor him ; and all those great virtues which Christians of high perfection possess ; if he had not some assurance of the love which our Lord was pleased to bear him, and together with it a lively Faith. For our nature is so very dead , that we look not after any thing but that which we see at the present ; and so these Favours are the things which awaken and strengthen our Faith. It may very well be , that I, being so very wicked , am apt to judge of others by my self ; and that those others may need no more than the very light and truth of Faith , for the making their works very perfect ; but I (as very miserable) have been in need of all possible helps. Others may well say what they please, but I relate what hath occurred to me ; as they , who have power over me, command ; and if he , to whom I send it, do not like it, he may tear it ; as knowing better than I, what is ill ; whom I humbly beseech, even for the love of our Blessed Lord, that, whatsoever I have said hitherto, concerning my wicked Life, and my Sins , he will publish it ; and from this instant, I give leave, both to him, and all them , who have been my Ghostly Fathers (of which number he is, to whom this is addressed) that they do even now whilst I am living ; to the end , that even now I may deceive the world no longer ; which else, perhaps, may think that there is some good thing in me ; and really , really, I speak truth to the best that I can now understand of my self, that he shall give me great comfort, if he will do it.

But as for that, which shall follow heareafter, in this Discourse, I allow him no such liberty, at all ; nor will I , by any meanes, give way, that if they chance to shew the thing to any, they declare who that person

son is, with whom it passed; nor, who wrote it; and for this reason, have I forborne, to name, either my self, or any other, who hath intervened in the Story. But I have done the best I could, to write it so, as that I may not be known; and I desire, for the love of our Lord, that it may ever remaine Secret. For it will suffice that there are so learned and grave persons, to authorize any thing, which is good, if our Lord will give me grace, to relate it; and if such it be, it must be his, and not mine; for I am without learning or good life; nor instructed by any that is learned, or any other person; (for they only, who command me to write it, know, that I writ it; and at the present, they are not here; and I write it also, as it were, by stealth, and with want of time, and with some trouble, because I am kept from spinning; and I live in a poor House, and have busines enough; and, if our Lord had given me more ability and, memory (I might by meanes thereof, have served my self of what I had heard, or read; but of this I have very little). So that, if I say any thing, which is good, our Lord will have it so for some good end; but whatsoever shall be ill said, will be mine own; and that, your Reverence may blot out. Both for the one, and the other, there will be no reason at all, to declare my name. During ones life, it is clear, that the good he doth, is not to be related; and after death, it will also serve for nothing, in my case; but only to make this good lose all authority, and credit, for having been recounted, of a person, so base, and so wicked, as my self. And, because I hope you will doe that, which I say, (and I humbly beg it of you, even for the love of our Lord; and of those others also, who are to see it) I write, as you see, with all liberty, and clearnes; for otherwise, I should have great scruple to do it, but only, for the meer declaration of my Sins; in which, I have none at all. As for other things, it is enough, that I am a woman, to make my wings fall down, how much more then, since I am not only a woman, but wicked too.

And therefore, whatsoever your Reverence shall find here, beyond the bare relation of the course of my Life, you must take, to be only, for your self; since you would needs importune me so far, as to make you some declaration of the Favours which our Lord is pleased to do me, in Prayer; supposing ever, that be conform to the Truths of our Holy Catholick Faith; for, if not, you are instantly to burn it; and to this I subject my self, and so I will declare, what passed with me in this kind; to the end, that if it shall prove conform to Catholick truth, it may be of some service to you; if not, that you may be the better able to undeceive my Soul; and so, the Devil may get nothing by that,

whereby I take my self to gain. For, our Lord knows, that I ever have procured to meet with persons who might give me light, as I shall shew afterward.

But, how clearly soever I shall strive to declare these things concerning Prayer, it will fall out to be obscure enough for such as have no experience therein. I will touch upon some impediments, which (according to my understanding) use to oppose themselves against such persons as are walking on in this way; and I will also point at some others, in which there may be some danger, according to what our Lord hath taught me by experience. And I having since treated with great learned men, and persons who have given themselves to the Spirit many years; they see, that his Divine Majesty hath vouchsafed me in seven and twenty years, wherein I have used Prayer, (though I have walked on so ill, and with so many stumblings in the way) that experience, which he hath not allowed to others in seven and thirty, yea and in seven and forty years; who yet have spent their time in Penance, and ever in a course of Virtue.

Let him be Blessed for all; and I beseech his Divine Majesty even by what he is himself, that he will vouchsafe to be served by me. For, my dear Lord knows very well, that I pretend no other thing by this, but only, that he may be a little the more exalted and praised; when you see that he would needs plant a Garden of so sweet Flowers upon a Dung-hill, so foul and filthy, and of so very ill favour as I am. His Divine Majesty grant that I return not through my fault to pluck them all up by the roots, and so become again what I was before. And this do I intreat your Reverence, that you will beg of our Lord for me; since you know, with more clearnes what I am, than here you have given me leave to express.

CHAP. XI.

She shews what is the cause of not attaining to love God with perfection in a short time. She begins to declare it by a Comparison which contains four degrees of Prayer. She treats here of the first, which is very profitable for beginners; and for them also who find no sensible delight in Prayer.

Now, to speak of them who begin to be Servants of Love, (for to me it seems to be nothing else, to resolve to follow him by this way of Prayer, who loved us so much) I find it so great a dignity, that I regale my self after a strange manner, even by the very thought thereof. For, servile fear will instantly flye away, if we carry our selves as we ought, in this first degree of Prayer. O thou Lord of my Soul, and my eternal Good! how comes it to pass, that, when a Soul resolves to love thee, and to do the uttermost she can to leave all this world, that so she may the better employ her self upon this love of thee, thou art not pleased that she should instantly enjoy the ascent to possess this perfect love? But I have said ill; for I ought indeed to have said, and complained why we will not our selves; because it is we who will not possess it since all the fault is ours, for not instantly obtaining this true love of God with perfection, which carries all kinds of blessings in company thereof. For, the matter is, that we set so high a price upon our selves, and we are withal so slow in giving our hearts totally to God, that, as his Divine Majesty on the one side, will not permit that we should enjoy so precious a thing without paying well for it: so, on the other, we never make an end of disposing our selves thereto as we ought. I see well enough that there is nothing at all in this world, with which so great a treasure can be bought; but yet, if we did indeed, what we could, by not fastning our selves to any thing of this world, but that all our care and conversation were in Heaven, I am confident that this blessing would be imparted to us with very great speed, if speedily and entirely (as I was saying) we disposed our selves to the receiving thereof, as some Saints have done. But the misery is, that we think we give God all; and the truth is, that we offer his Divine Majesty but the yearly Rents, or Fruits, our selves remaining still with the Tree and the possession. We resolve to make our selves poor for God's sake, and it is a point of great

merit to do so; but yet, we return many times to take care , and to use diligences enow, that nothing may be wanting to us ; I say not of that, which is necessary, but somtimes also, even of that, which is superfluous ; and to procure also friends who may help us to it , and so to put our selves still into more care, yea, and perhaps into more danger too, (that we may want nothing) than even we had before, when we were the possessors of our own elates.

It seems also, that, when we came to be Religious , or as soon as we began to lead a Spiritual life, and to aspire towards perfection , we gave over to care for the honour of this world ; and yet, so soon as any Creature begins but to touch us in that kind , we forget that we had already given it away to God ; and we resolve sometimes to snatch it again out of his hands (as they say) and run away with it, even after we seemed to have voluntarily made him the entire Lord thereof. And just thus doth it also happen somtimes in other things. Now, this indeed is a fine way of seeking the love of Almighty God, when, together with this pretence, we will (as a man may say) have our hands still full of the same imperfect inclinations and affections which we had before ; since we do not procure to effect our own former good desires ; nor endeavour at length to raise them wholly up from the earth ; and yet we will needs expect the while to enjoy many Spiritual comforts and delights. But this seems not to Suite well ; nor doth the one seem to consist with the other ; and therefore, because we will not once resolve to give our selves totally up to Almighty God, we come not totally to enjoy this Treasure. May it please his Divine Majesty to vouchsafe to grant it to us, though it should be but drop by drop ; and though it should grow to cost us all the labours and troubles in the world.

A very great deal of mercy doth our Lord shew to that person to whom he gives the firme purpose and grace , to resolve upon procuring this blessing with all his power; for certainly, if such an one shal persevere, God wil deny himself to none, but will by little and little enable, and give courage to that Soul in such fort , that at length , it shall be victorious. I say give courage ; because the Devil doth ordinarily in the beginnings present very great difficulties ; to the end , that so we may not hold on this way in good earnest ; as one, who knows very well, what prejudice is like to grow to him by it ; not only through his losing the Soul of that Party, but of many others also ; if he, who begins to serve God, endeavour by his favour to arrive to the perfection thereof. For, I believe that such an one will never go alone to Heaven, but will carry very many with him ; as to a good Captain, God gives those that will bear

bear him company. So that , since the Devil will be sure to lay such dangers and difficulties in his way , there will be need of very great courage and resolution , to keep one from running away ; yea and also , of much , and very much favour of God for this purpose .

Now therefore , to speak of the beginnings of such , as be already resolved to go in search after so great a blessing , and in the end , to obtain what they aspire to , (for , as for that , whereof I was going once to speak concerning Mystical Theologie (for so I think it is called) I will treat thereof afterward) all the greatest trouble consists in these beginnings . For , in those it cost most pains ; our Lord then giving them the Stock . Whereas in the other degrees of Prayer , which follow the most part of that which passes , is delighting and enjoying ; though yet still , both the First , Middle , and Last , have all of them their several Crosses to carry , yet , in a different kind . But , in fine , all they , who will follow Christ our Lord , must go by that way which he went , unless they have a mind to be lost . And happy are those troubles which are endured here , since even here , they are so superabundantly recompensed and paid .

I must now serve my self of some Comparison , which yet I would be glad to forbear , in regard that I am a woman ; and would fain set that down very simply and plainly , which they command me to say . But this language of Spirit is so very hard to be declared by such as are unlearned like me , that I must seek some particular manner how to do it . And it is likely that I shall seldome hit right to make the Comparison serve my turn , but , in that case , it may pass for your recreation , to see how improper and rude I am .

To my remembrance , I have either read , or heard this Comparison , which follows here ; for , my memory is so very imperfect , that I know not how , nor upon what occasion , I met with it first ; but it contents me , at least , for the present , in order to what I have in hand . He , who begins in the way of Prayer , must conceive that he is beginning to frame an Orchard , or Garden , for the contentment , and delight of his Lord ; though yet , it be in a very unfruitful Soil , and full of Weeds . His Divine Majesty now is he , who must be pleased to plant the good Herbs , and root up the ill ones . But now we will make account , that this is done already , in our case , when a Soul , not only resolves , but hath already begun to use Prayer . And now , by the help of our Lord , we must procure , like careful Gardners , that these good Herbs , which are planted , may grow ; and we must take care , to water them , so that they may not wither , but may come to yeild Flowers of so excellent odour , as may serve to be of recreation to his Lord .

of

of ours ; that so, he may take pleasure, to come often into this Garden of his, and delight himself, amongst these vertues of our Souls.

Now let us see, in what sort, these Flowers may be watered, that so we may come to understand, what we are to do, and what trouble it is likely to cost ; and whether the gaine will prove to be more, than the labour ; and how long it will be likely to last. As for me it occurs to me, to think, that these Plants may be watered by four wayes : Either, by drawing water out of a Well, which we cannot do without much labour ; or by way of a Weel, with certain little Buckets, belonging to it, which is easily turned about, by the hand ; and my self have drawn some, thus, now and then ; and I find, that it brings up more water, with lesse trouble than doth that, of the former way. Or else, by meanes of letting in, some little Brook, or River, into the Garden ; and, by this meanes, the Garden is watered much better, than by the former ; and the earth remaines with more moisture ; and there will not be need, to water it so often ; and the labour also of the Gardner, is much lesse. Or else, in fine, when there falls a good Showre of Raine upon the Garden, for then, the Lord himself waters it, without any labour at all, of ours ; and this is, without comparison, the very far best way, of all the four.

But now, for applying these four wayes of using Water, whereby this Garden of ours, is to be preserved (because a Garden without water, is spoiled) that, which, me-thinks, is to our purpose, is, that we may, by this Similitude, declare somewhat of these four degrees of Prayer; into which, our Lord, through his goodness, hath sometimes brought my Soul. and I humbly beseech him, of his mercy, that I may hit right upon what I am about to say ; in such sort, as that it may be of use, and profit, to one of those persons, who commanded me to write thus much ; and whom our Lord hath drawn further on, in four months, then I was able to get, in seventeen yeares. But certainly, he disposed himself better ; and so, the Gardner hath watered his Orchard, without any trouble at all, with all these four kindes of Water ; though the last of the four, have not yet, fallen but by drops. But the busyness goes on, in such sort, that by the favour, and help of our Lord, he will quickly engulf himself therein ; and I shall be heartily glad, if he laugh at me, in case he finde the manner of my declaring this Point to have been impertinent.

Of them, who begin to practise Prayer, we may say, that these are the persons, who draw water out of the Well, which uses to be very troublous, as I have said ; for they are to take much paines ; about re-

recollecting their Senses ; which having been used to wander, and go scattered up and down, it is wont to be of trouble enough. These persons have therefore need, to go accustoming themselves, not to desire to see, or hear impertinent things ; but to observe their hours of Prayer ; and retired and alone to consider the life , which they have lead ; though all, whether they be either of the First Degree, or of the Last, are also to employ themselves upon these thoughts very often ; yet there is more , and lesse, in practising these cogitations ; as I will shew afterward. At first, they are wont, to be in some paine , because they be not fully satisfied, that they repent them-selves sufficient-ly of their Sins ; and yet they faile not to do it , since they resolve to serve God, in so very good earnest. They must procure, to meditate much, upon the life of Christ our Lord ; though the Understanding, will perhaps, be weary in this. Hitherto, we may be able, our selves to arrive; I mean, together with the favour of our Lord ; for, without this, the world knows well enough, that we are not able, so much as to have a good thought.

Now, This is to begin, to draw Water out of a Well ; and I pray God, there fall out to be any there ; but at least, the fault is not ours, if there be none ; since we endeavour to draw it ; and since we do, what we can , towards the watring of these Flowers. And God is so very good, that when (for reasons, best known to his Divine Majesty, yea, and perhaps, even for our own greater good) he will have this Well, to be dry, he is pleased (so that still, we do our parts, like good Gardners) to sustain these Flowers, without any water at all ; and to make our vertues grow. I mean here, by Water, Teares ; whereof there may, peradventure, be none ; as also no tenderness, or inward feeling of Devotion.

But what shall he do now, who sees, that, for the space of a long time, there is nothing but driness, and disgust, and displeasure ; and so little devotion also to go draw any more Water, out of the Well ? For, certainly if he did not remember, that he doth some kind of pleasure, and service, to the Lord of the Garden, and did not expect, not to lose all the labour, which he hath already undergon, and the hope also of more gaine to come, by so great paines, as he takes, to cast the Bucket so often into the Well, and to bring it back, without any water at all ; without doubt, he would give over outright. And, many times it shall also happen to him, that he shall not be able so much as to stir his hand about it, nor so much as to continue one good thought ; for this way of working , by the imployment of the under-

standing , is understood here to be this drawing water out of a Well.

But now, as I was saying, what is the Gardner to do in this case ? he is to rejoice, and to receive much comfort , and to esteem it, for an incomparable Favour, that he may be suffered to labour, and work in the Garden, of so great an Emperour. And, since he knowes that he gives contentment to his Divine Majestie thereby, (for, the gulf, and service of God, and not the Gardners own, is to be his main, and final scope (let him give God glory, and praise, who proceeds with him, and treats him, in so confident a manner ; since he gives him grace, to have so great care of doing that, which he recommended to him, though he do not pay him yet, for his paines. And let this Garden still help our Lord, to carry his Cross; and remember, that the same Lord, lived with the same Crosse, all his life. And let not this man desire, to enjoy his Kingdom here, in this World; nor ever give-over his Prayer ; but let him rather resolve, that, though his drincks of sensible in-devotion, should last with him as long as his life, yet he will never give occasion, that Christ our Lord should fall down, with his Cross. For, at least, the time will certainly come, when he shall receive all his wages at one payment; and let him never fear, that his labour can possibly be lost; for, he serves a very good Master, who stands looking earnestly upon him. And let him make no account at all of ill thoughts, but consider, that the Devil did also vex S. Hierom with them, in the very Wildernes. But these labours, have their price, and recompence set out for them ; and I assure you, as a person, who have spent many years so, that, when sometimes I came to draw, and get but some one single drop of water, out of this blessed Well, I thought; that God did me a great Favour.

I know well, that these troubles are very great ; and I conceive, that there is more need of courage, for supporting them, than for many other things of this world ; but yet I have seen clearly, that God leaves them not, without great reward, even in this life. For it is most certain, that, with one of these howers of that gulf of himself, which he hath given me here, afterwards I esteeme all those sad afflictions, to have been very well rewarded, wch I sustaine, in all the former time of my containing the use of Prayer. As for me, I hold, that our Lord will give these torments (together with many other temptations, which occur) many times, in the beginning ; and sometimes, afterward ; to try, who are his true Lovers ; and to know if they can drink of his Chalice , and will help him to bear his Cross, before he will deposite so great treasures with them. And I conceive, that his Divine Majesty is resolved to carry us on by this

this way, to the end, that we may first understand well, how little worth are we ; for, the Favours, which sometimes he imparts afterward, are of so great dignity, that he will, first, have us see our misery by experience, before he gives them ; lest otherwise, that should happen to us, which did to Lucifer.

But, what dost thou O my Lord, which is not for the greater good of that Soul, which thou knowest, to be already thine, and which puts it self into thy hands, to follow thee, whithersoever thou wilt go, though it were even to the very death of the Cross; & which is resolved to heal thee to carry it, and never to leave thee alone, under that burthen ? whosoever findes this resolution in himself, hath nothing left for him, to fear. Spiritual persons have no reason at all to be afflited, who are already placed in so eminent a condition, as, it is, to treat with God, all alone; and to forsake the idle pastimes of this world. The greatest part of your business is dispatched already ; and praise his Divine Majesty for the same, and confide in his goodness ; for, he never yet failed his friends. Shut-up the eyes of your Mind, from thinking, why doth he give sensible devotion to another, in so few dayes ; and not to me, in so many years ? Let us believe, and know, that all this, is done by him for our greater good ; and let his Divine Majesty conduct us by what way he will ; for now, we are no longer our own, but his ; and he doth us Favor enough, in permitting us, to dig in his Garden, and to suffer us to be so near the Lord thereof. For it is certain, that he remaines, with us ; and whether he be pleased, that the Plants and Flowers of his Garden, grow, or not grow, either more or lesse, what is that to the purpose ? Do thou dispose so, of things, O Lord, as shall please thee best ; and let me, only, not offend thee ; nor let my vertues be lost, if thou have given me any. I am resolved, O Lord, to suffer, since thou would'st suffer ; and thy Will be accomplished in me in all kindes ; and let not thy Divine Majesty be pleased, that a thing of so high value, as thy Love, may ever be given to any such people as will not serve thee, but only for delights, and gusts.

It is here to be noted much, (and I speak it, because I know the truth of it by experience) that the Soul, which begins to walk in this way of Mental Prayer with firm purpose, and can bring her self once to a final resolution, neither to be comforted, nor discomfited greatly, because our Lord doth either give or not give these spiritual gusts, or tenuities of devotion, hath already passed through a very great part of his way. And let him not once think of turning back, how much soever he may falter, or stumble ; for his Building is laid, and grounded, upon a firm Foundation.

So that, the true Love of God, consists not, in having teares, or tendernes, or Spiritual gusts, which we are wont, for the most part, to desire, and to take comfort in; but to serve his Divine Majesty, with uprightnes, and Fortitude of mind, and Humility. For in that other course me-thinks, we are rather on the taking hand, than on the giving any thing of our own. As for poor, weak, silly women, and who are of little courage, like me, me-thinks I could find it fit, that our Lord should carry them on with Regalo; that so, they might be the better induced to suffer those afflictions, which it hath pleafed his Divine Majesty that they should bear. But, for the true Servants of God; men of Substance, of Learning, and Understanding, to make so much reflection upon Gods not giving them tenderness of Devotion, as I see they do, gives me disgust, to hear it. I say not, but that they should receive these Spiritual delights, when God gives them; yea, and that they should esteem them very much; because, in that case, his Divine Majesty, sees, that they are convenient for them; but only, that, when they have them not, they should not vex themselves; & that they should also understand, that, when God gives them not, they are not convenient for them; and so remain Lords of themselves. Let them believe, that this is a defect, and fault, in them; for I have seen, and tryed it. Let them believe, that this is an imperfection; and that it is not, to walk on with Liberty of Spirit, but rather like weak, and cowardly people, who dare not set upon difficulties. And I say not this so much for them, who are but beginners; (though yet I presse it so far, because it imports very much, that they begin with this Liberty of Spirit, and resolution) but for others. For, there are many, who have already begun, and yet who never, in fine, resolve upon doing herein what they ought; and I believe, that this proceeds, in great part from their not resolving to take up, and carry this Croſs from the very beginning. Such go on, all afflicted, conceiving, that all that is nothing, which they do; and when the Understanding gives-over to work, and act, they are not able to endure it; and yet, perhaps, the will grows fat, and gets strength, at the same time, and themselves do not understand it.

We are to think, that our Lord doth not regard these things; for, howeuer our selves may conceive that they are faults, yet they are not so indeed; and his Divine Majesty knows our misery, and base condition much better, than our selves; and considers, that these Souls desire to be thinking alwayes upon him; and that they desire to love him. And this is that firm purpose, which he values, and expects at our hands. But, that other,

other, is but an affliction, which we bring upon our selves; for it serves but to disquiet the Soul, and to give occasion, that, if before, it were unable to take any benefit, for one hower, it may now be so for four. And, many times (for I have very great experience of this case, and know it to be true, because I have both considered it with care, and also treated about it with Spiritual persons) this growes, even from our corporal indisposition; for we are so very infirm, and miserable, that this poor emprisoned Soul of ours, participates in the miseries of the Body; and even the alteration of the weather; and the revolution of their own natural humors, are many times the occasion, why, (without any fault of theirs,) they cannot well do, what they would, but are fain to suffer thus, in all kinds. And they strive to force themselves, in these conjectures of time, it proves to be so much the worse with them; and the inconvenience will last so much the longer. But discretion must be used herein, to weigh, when this Effect proceeds from this Cause; and they must not oppres and stifle this poor Soul, but understand that it is sick. Let the hour of Prayer be changed; yea, and many times it will be fit to do so for some days; and let them pass through this banishment of theirs as well as they can; since it is misfortune and misery enough, for a Soul which doth indeed love God, to see, that she lives in so great misery; and that she is no way able to do what her self desires, in regard that she is lodged with so untoward and ill an Host, as this Body is.

I said this was to be done with *discretion*; because sometimes the Devil will be a cause of these things; and therefore it is good, neither alwaies to leave the usual and set time of Prayer, whensoever there may be great disturbance and distraction in the Understanding; nor yet alwaies to stand tormenting the Soul towards the making it do more than it can. There are also other exterior things, as works of Charity, and reading also to be used; though yet sometimes the Soul will not be so much as fit even for that; in such case, let the Mind be subject to the Body for the love of God, since many other times the Body serves the Soul; and let the Party in such cases take the entertainment and pastime of conversation with others, so that it be holy; or divert himself with going a little abroad to take the Ayre; as the Ghostly Father shall advise. For, Experience is a great School-Mistris in all things, towards the giving any one to understand what may be fit; and God is served in all this busines; for, his Yoak is sweet; and it is a thing of much importance, that the Soul be not servilely dragged, (as one may say) but that it be carried sweetly on for its greater benefit.

So that I advise again and again, (for though I say it often, it will do no hurt, because the matter imports so much) that no body is to afflict nor oppress himself either for drinesses, or inquietude, or distraction of thoughts; if he would gain Liberty of Spirit, and not always be perplext. Let him once begin not to be in such a fright upon the sight of the Cross; and he shall see how our Blessed Lord will help him to bear it; and what contentment he will find, and how he will be able to make his profit of all things. For, already, we may sufficiently perceive, that, if there be no Spring of Water in the Well, we know not how to put any there. True it is, that we must by no means be negligent and careless, but endeavour to draw it out if there be any; because then our Lord is pleased by that means to multiply our virtues.

C H A P. XII.

She prosecutes her Discourse of the First State or Degree of Prayer; and declares how far we may arrive of our selves by the Favour of God; And of the hurt it brings, to desire that our Spirit may rise to Supernatural and Extraordinary things, till our Lord himself be pleased to ordain it.

THAT which I pretended to give to be understood in the last Chapter (though yet I diverted my self much upon other things, in regard, that I thought them very necessary) was, to declare how much we our selves might be able to acquire; and how in this First part of our devotions we might help our selves to some proportion; because the considering and ruminating upon that which our Lord suffered for us, is wont to move us to compassion; and the sorrow and tears which grow from thence is very savoury and delightful. And so, to think of the Glory which we hope for; and of the Love which our Lord bare us; as also of his Resurrection; moves us to joy, which is neither wholly Spiritual, nor wholly Sensual; but a virtuous joy, and that pain very meritorious; And of this sort are all those things, which cause any such devotion as is acquired in part by the Understanding; though yet it cannot merit nor gain it, unless God be pleased to give it.

But now, it will be very fit for a Soul, which our Lord hath not raised any higher, not to procure to exalt her self; and let this be very well noted; for, the contrary course will help her to nothing but los. In this

this State she may perform many good acts by way of resolving to do great things for God ; and stirring up her love; and others also by way of assisting her self to grow up in several vertues ; according to what is contained in a certain Book, called *The Art of serving God* ; which is a very good one, and very proper for such as find themselves in this State, because here the Understanding doth act and exercise it self. She may also represent her self, as in the presence of Christ our Lord, and accustom her self to be greatly enamoured on his most Sacred Humanity ; and to be ever carrying that along in her company ; and to be often speaking to him ; and to beg his continual assistance in all her necessities ; and to complain to him of her afflictions ; and to joy with him in her contentments and gusts ; and not forget him upon occasion thereof ; And all this without procuring any set kind of Prayers, save only such words as may have conformity with her own necessities and desires.

This is an excellent way of finding profit , and that in a very short time ; and, whosoever shall earnestly labour to carry this pretious company with him , and shall have proceeded well therein , and shall have found the way of loving in very good earnest this Lord of ours, to whom we owe so much, I hold him for a very good Proficient. For this purpose let it not trouble us a whit, not to find our selves with sensible devotion as I have said ; but let us give thanks to our Lord for giving us so good desires to please him , though our works be weak.

This way of Carrying Christ our Lord in our company , is very useful in all the four States and Degrees of Prayer , and is a most secure means to go profiting in the first Degree ; and to get quickly to the second ; and then in the two last to be free also from those dangers which the Devil may provide for us. For, this , in fine, is that which we may be able to do ; and for any body to pass up from hence, and to exalt his Spirit towards the feeling of certain gusts which are not allowed him, is but, in my opinion to lose both the one and the other ; because, in fine, that is all Supernatural ; and so the Understanding being at a Stand, and lost, the Soul remains all desolate , and with great driness. And since this whole Building is grounded upon Humility, the nearer we grow to God, the more must we proceed and profit in this Vertue ; and , if we do not this , all is lost. And it seems to be no better than a kind of pride, if we desire to get up to a higher rank, since God doth us but too much honour and favour (considering how unworthy we are) in suffering us to be so near to him as we are.

But now it must not be so understood , as if I spoke all this against raising up our thoughts to consider the high things of Heaven , or of God,

God, or of the greatnesses which are there above ; as also of his incomparable Wisdome. For, though I never did this, (because I had no ability for this purpose, as I have said , and I found my self so miserable, that God did me a favour to enable me to think of earthly things, whereby I understood this truth ; that even this was no small adventure for me ; and how much more to consider Celestial things) yet others may take benefit hereby ; and especially , if they have Learning and Knowledge, which is in my opinion a great treasure towards this exercise of Prayer, if it be accompanied with Humility. I have seen the truth of this very lately, by occasion of some learned men , who begun not long agoe, and yet have proceeded and profited very much ; which makes me have an earnest, and even a kind of impatient desire, that many such as are learned, would grow to be very Spiritual men , whereof I shall give the reason hereafter.

But now, that which I have said , That men must not exalt themselves to rise higher than God doth raise them, is a certain kind of Language of Spirit ; and he will understand me who hath experience of it ; but as for me, I know not how to express it, if he know not how to understand me by what I have said .

In *Mystical Theology* (whereof I began to speak) the Understanding ceases from working , because Almighty God * suspends it ; as I will declare hereafter, if I be able , and if he give me grace for that purpose. But as for us to presume, yea, or think of suspending it , is that which I am saying we should not do ; Nor must we leave to act and work therewith ; for, if we do, we shall be stupid, and fottish, and cold ; and we shall effect neither the one nor the other. But when our Lord suspends and stops it , he furnishes it with matter which it may employ it self upon, and admire, and understand more in the time of one *Credo* , (though yet still, not by way of Discourse) than we could tell how to understand with all our humane diligences of this world , in the compas of many years. But now to exercise and employ the Powers of the Mind , and multitude to think of making them stand quiet , is a foolery. And I say again of Super- (though perhaps it be not understood so) that this is no act of any great natural Humility ; and though it should be without fault , yet not without punishment ; for at least it will be all labour lost ; and the Soul find it self before it ; together with a copious infusion of Light , which is discerned by it, after a kind of intuitive way at once, without discourse or trouble : And this Light rests not there, but passes on to the Will, and grows to be as so much Fire, for the inflaming it in the Love of our Lord. And the Soul doth more properly suffer here, than all.

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self to remain with a little kind of disgust ; as when a man goes to leap, and men hold him fast by the back. For , such an one seems already to have employed all his strength to do somewhat which he desired, and yet finds himself without effecting what he pretended. And so , whosoever will consider the matter well, shall come to discerne by the slender gain, which he makes some little want of Humility, whereof I spake. For, in fine, this vertue hath that excellency amongst others in it, That there is no work or action in the world, if it be accompanied with that vertue, which will ever leave the Soul in disgust. I think I have sufficiently explained this matter, yet perhaps only for my self : may God be pleased to open the eyes of those who read it with a little experience, and they will quickly understand it. There were divers years , when I was wont to read many things , and yet understood none of them ; and there was afterward also a long time, when, though God gave me ability to understand, yet could I not speak a word wherewith to make it be understood by others ; and this point cost me no small labour. But , when his Divine Majesty hath a mind to teach it, he doth it so all at an instant, that I am amazed. And one thing I can say with much truth, that, though I speak with many Spiritual persons , who had a mind to make me understand what our Lord imparted to me , that so I might the better declare things in a particular and clear manner to them ; it is certain , that my dulnes was so great, that their discourse was not of any use to me at all. And perhaps our Blessed Lord (as his Divine Majesty vouchsafe) still to be my Master ; and let him be blessed for ever, since it is confusion enough for me to be able to say thus much with truth) was pleased that I should have no body to thank for it but himself ; and that, without my desiring, or even wishing it, (for in this I was not a whit curious , wherein it might have been a vertue to be so, but I was so about the vanities of the world) he would give me to understand and comprehend it with all clarity ; yea and so, as that I could unfold it also to others ; in such sort , as that men were amazed at it ; and my self more than any of my Ghostly Fathers ; because I understood mine own dulnes better than they. Nor is it any long time since this hapned to me ; and so I procure not to know those things which our Lord hath not taught me, unles it be somthing wherein my Conscience may be concerned.

I return yet once again to advise, that it will import us very much, not to elevate and raise our Spirit, unless our Lord be pleased to elevate and raise it ; which if he do , it will instantly be understood ; and especially this is more dangerous for Women ; for, the Devil may bring some illusion upon them ; though yet withal I hold it for certain that our Lord

will not permit that the Devil should be able to hurt any such person, as shall procure to approach his Divine Majesty with Humility; but rather that he shall be able to gain more advantage and profit by that, whereby the Devil meant to destroy him. In regard that this is the most usual way of beginners in the exercise of Prayer, and because the admonitions which I have given, import much, I have enlarged my self thus far; though yet, others have written much better of it. I confess it; and I have writ this with abundance of confusion and shame, though yet still not with so much as I ought to have had. Let our Lord be ever blessed for all, since he is pleased, and permits, that so miserable a creature as I should speak of things belonging to his Divine Majesty; and those things, such, and so high.

CHAP. XIII.

She proceeds in this first Degree and State of Prayer; and gives advice against some Temptations, which the Devil is sometimes wont to use.

I Have thought fit to speak here of certain Temptations which happen in the beginning to use Prayer; and some I have felt my self; and I will also give some advice which I hold to be necessary herein. Let therefore a Beginner procure to go on with great alacrity and Liberty; for there be some who are apt to think that all their devotion is instantly to vanish, if they do never so little relax therein. It is true, that it will be very fit to continue in a holy doubt and fear of themselves, that so they may not be confident at all, little, or much, to put themselves into any occasion wherein our Lord is wont to be offended; for, it will ever be very necessary to use this actual diligence, till one be very perfect in virtue; and there are not many who may be so confident of themselves, as in such occasions which sure with their natural disposition and inclination to be void of care and fear. And, in fine, it will ever be fit, that so long as we shall live in this world, we consider our miserable nature, though it were but even for the continual exercise of humility; but there are many things wherein it is permitted, as I have said, to take recreation, though it were but to enable us the better to return the more fortifyed to Prayer. In all things it will be needful to use discretion, and to have great confidence; for, it is by no means fit to go lessning

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our desires, but to believe of God, that if we will force our selves by little and little, we may, by the favour of his Divine Majesty, arrive, though not presently, where many Saints have arrived; who, if they had never resolved to aspire to Perfection, and had not also endeavoured by little and little to acquire it, would never have obtained so high a State. His Divine Majesty is a very great friend and favourer of courageous Souls; so that withal they proceed with Humility, and not with confidence in themselves; and I have yet never seen any one of this kind, who hath continued to remain in a very inferiour degree in this way; nor never also, any one cowardly Soul (though with the guard of Humility) which went so far in many years, as I have found those others do in very few. I am even amazed when I consider, how much it imports in this way for one to animate himself towards the doing of great things; though he may, perhaps, not instantly have force wherewith to perform: For thus the Soul puts her self to make a Flight; and advanceth much, though like some young Bird, not so well feathered, she be weary, and pause. In former time, I often remembred, and considered what S. Paul affirmes of himself, Namely, *That he could do all things in God, who strengthened him*; for, as for me, I knew well that I could do nothing of my self. But that saying of his did me very much good; and so also did this other of St. Augustin: *Give me, O Lord, what thou commandest; and then command me what thou wilt.* And for my part, I thought also many times that S. Peter lost nothing by the bargain, when he cast himself into the Sea, though yet he were afraid afterward. In a word, these first strong purposes and resolutions are a greater matter, though yet in this first degree and State, it is fit, that we go with restraint and be tyed to the discretion and disposing of a Directour; but then we must procure he may be such an one as will not teach us to move like Snails; nor be content that our Souls set themselves only to hunt Lizards; Only humility must ever go before, that so we may be sure to understand that this strength doth not grow from our selves.

But here it will be necessary for us to know what kind of Humility this of ours must be; and I am very apt to think that the Devil does much hurt towards the making such as exercise Prayer, not to advance more in their way, by causing them to mis-understand Humility; and by procuring to make us believe, that it is but a kind of Pride to have Heroical desires; and to pretend to imitate Saints; and desire to be Martyrs. For, upon this, he tells us, and makes us think, that the actions of Saints are fit to be admired, but not to be imitated by us who are Sinners. This do I also say; only we must consider, what, in particular, is fit for admiration

ration, and what for imitation. For it would be no way convenient that a person, who were sick and weak, should put himself upon great Fasts and Sharp Penances; or should betake himself to the Wildernels, where he might neither be able to sleep, nor yet could get what to eat; or the like. But yet, we ought to think, that we may well force our selves by God's Favour to hold the world in great contempt; not to esteem honour; not to be tyed up to riches. But we really have hearts so very poor and straight, that it seems to us, as if we could not have ground enough to go upon, if once we should lay the care of our Body, never so little aside, to bestow it on the Soul.

It seems to us presently, that, for the better enjoying of Recollection, it will be good that we be in no want of necessary things; for any kind of care will be able to disquiet us in Prayer. I am heartily sorry that we should have so little confidence in God, and so much love of our selves, as that we should be disquieted by such a thought. But the truth is, that wherefover we have made so small progress as this, in the way of Spirit, certain trifles will trouble us as much as greater, and more substantial matters will do others; and yet still (in our way of understanding) we will needs presume our selves to be Spiritual. It seems to me, that this kind of proceedings shews a desire in us so to accord the Body and Soul, as that we may take our ease in this world, and yet enjoy God in the next; and that conceit will prove to be true, if we live according to Justice, and continue to stick close to Virtue; but yet still this is but the pace of a Hen, and it will never be able to bring us on to enjoy true Liberty of Spirit. This seems, indeed, to be a good way of proceeding, for such as are in state of Marriage, who are to carry themselves according to their Vocation; but for another state, I do, by no means desire any such kind of profiting in Spirit as this; nor shall they ever make me believe that it is a good one, for I have tryed it long enough; and I had ever continued in that way, if our Lord, through his infinite goodness had not shewed me another, and a shorter cut; though yet withal it be true that I had ever great desires; but I procured (as I have said) to use Prayer; and yet still to live withall at my pleasure. But really, I conceive, that if any would have encouraged me to flye a higher pitch, I should have striven hard to make those desires prove deeds. But alas, it is true, that through our Sins, there are so very few so quickly counted, who have not too much discretion in such occurrences as these, that I beleive it is a great part of the cause, why such, as are beginners advance no faster towards great perfection; for, our Lord doth never fail on his part; but it is we, who are still the faulty and miserable,

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We may also be able to imitate the Saints, in procuring to use Solitude, and to keep silence; and to exercise many other vertues, which will yet by no means murder this miserable Body, which they desire with so much order to conduct and mannage, as even thereby to disorder the Soul. And the Devil is careful enough to help to render us more unable; for, when he sees but a little fear, he desires no more than to make us apprehend that every thing will be apt to kill us; or at least, to deprive us of our health; and, if we be accustomed to have tears, he puts us into a fear that we shall be blind. My self have passed this way, and therefore I know it; and I know not what better kind of life or health we can possibly desire, than to lose both upon such an occasion. My self being so sickly as I was, till I resolved to make no account at all of my health and of my body, was ever tyed up, and good for nothing; and even now, it is very little which I can do. But yet, as soon as our Lord was pleased that I should understand this deceit and trick of the Devil, if he objected to me my los of health, I told him, it importedit little if I dyed; If he tempted me with love of rest, and ease, I told him, that it was not ease which I needed, but a Croſs; and so also in other things. For, I ſaw clearly, that, in very many it was either a temptation of the Devil, or mine own lazineſs; though yet indeed I be ſickly enough. But howſoever, I now enjoy much better health, ſince I am not ſo very curious and dainty as I was, than I did before. And it is therefore of great importance in the beginnings of uſing Prayer, not to have pufillanimous thoughts. And let them believe me herein; for I know it by experience; and perhaps it may be of good uſe for me to recount my faults, that ſo others may take warning by me.

There is also another temptation, and it is very uſual; To desire that every one might grow to be very Spiritual, when once themselves begin to taſte the repole; and gain that is in it. It is not an ill thing, to desire it, but to procure it may peradventure not be good; unless much discretion, and diſſimulation, be uſed, in doing it ſo, as that they ſeem not, to take upon them to teach; for, ſuch as will procure to do good, upon their neighbours, in ſuch caſes as this, had need have their own vertues very ſtrong; leſt elſe, they cauſe ſome temptation to others. It happened thus to me, and therefore I understand it; that when (as I was laying) I procured, that others might uſe Prayer; and on the one ſide they heard me ſpeak high matters of the great benefit, which it brought, to uſe Prayer; & ſaw, on the other, how very poor I was in point of vertue, I occaſioned them to be tempted, and disorderd; and this with reaſon enough; yea, themſelves told me as much, afterward; For they knew

knew not how it was possible, for one of those things, to consist with the other ; and it made them not to think that to be ill, which yet indeed was so ; because, forsooth, they saw me do it somtimes, when they held so good an opinion of me. And this doth the Devil effect, who, it seemes, can serve his turn even of the vertues, which we have ; that so, he may the better, authorize the evil he pretends ; and how little soever that be in it self, yet when that is done in a community, he gains very much, by it ; and how much more, when that, which I did ill, was very much. And so, in many years, there were only three persons, who received benefit by what I told them ; and, when our Lord was already pleased, to bestow more strength of vertue upon me, they were many who profited by me, even in two or three yeares ; as I will shew afterward.

Besides, there is this other great inconvenience, that the Soul loses her own proficiency in vertue ; for, the cheif thing which she is to procure at first is only to take care of her self alone ; and to make account, that there is not in the whole world any one thing, but God, and she. And this is a certain point, which imports the same Soul very much.

There is also yet another temptation (and all, such as this shew themselves ever by a kind of zeal of vertue ; and it is fit to understand them, and to walk with all circumspection) and this is a trouble, which we receive, from the defects, and faults, which we discern in others. For, the Devil procures to make us believe, that this grief is entertained by us, but only because we would not have them offend God ; and that we are troubled about his honour ; and then presently they would fain procure to redres it ; and this care so disquiets us, that it hinders our Prayer ; yea, and the greatest mischief of all, is, that we think that this is vertue, and perfection, and great zeal of God's service. I speak not of the grief which publick Sins cause, when they are usually committed by a Community, or when they prejudice the Church ; as these Heresies do, whereby we find so many Souls to be lost ; for this is a very good sorrow and trouble ; and, in regard that it is so good, it disturbs not him who hath it. The secure way then, for that soul which desires to give it self to Prayer, is to seek to forget both all things, and all persons ; and to attend to keep all reckonings straight with her self, and so give contentment to God. Now, this is very convenient ; and if I should stand to tell you, what errours I have seen fall-out to be committed, upon the confidence men have put in their good intentions, I should never make an end. Let us therefore always procure to consider the vertues, and good works, which we shall discern in others ; and

and to shut our eyes from seeing their defects, by the consideration of our own great sins. Now, this is a kind of working, wherein, though we arrive not instantly, to do it with perfection, yet we come in time to gain a great virtue, which is to hold every body better than our selves; and thus we begin to get it, through the Favour of God (whereof we have need in all things: For, whosoever that is wanting to us, all other diligences serve to little purpose) we must therefore humbly pray him, to bestow this grace upon us, wherein certainly, if we be as careful as we ought, he will not be wanting.

Let them also consider well of this following advice, who use to discourse much with the understanding; and have power to draw out of some one subject, many considerations and conceits. For, as for them who are not able to work with this Faculty (as I can not) there is no cause of counsellelling them so; but only to have patience, till our Lord shall be pleased to help them to matter, upon which to work; and light, where-with to know, how to do it; Since they are able, to performe so little, for themselves, as that their Understanding doth rather give them trouble, than help. But, returning now to such others as are able to Discourse, let them, I say, take care, that their whole time be not spent in that; for, howsoever it be very meritorious, yet considering how favourly a thing such Prayer is to them, they conceive that a Sunday should never come, nor any Season, wherein they are not thus to labour; otherwise they think straight, their time is lost; though, for my part, I conceive all that Loss is gain. Only let them, as I have said, represent themselves, as in the presence of Christ our Lord; and, without wearying of the Understanding, be speaking, and regaling themselves with him; and not tire their wits to find out reasons, but meerly present their necessities, and the reason he hath, not to endure them there. Some one at one time, and some at an other; that so the Soul may not be weary of feeding alwayes upon one Dish.

These things are both very gustful and profitable, if once the Party be accustomed to feed on them; for they bring great support and strength to give life to the Soul, and many advantages. I will declare my self further upon this matter; because all these points concerning Prayer carry their difficulties along with them; and unless there be a good Directour at hand, they are very hard to be understood. Which is the reason, that, (though I would fain contract things, and that justly, because it would suffice me, but even to touch them, by reason of the great capacity of him who commanded me to write these particulars of Prayer,) yet my dulnes is not able to declare and explicate in a few words,

a thing so important to be well understood. And, because I suffered so very much by using only Books, when I began the exercise of Prayer, I have compassion of all them who do so too; for it is strange to see how far otherwise Books are wont to be understood, than is learnt by experience.

But now (to return to what I was saying) let us put our selves to consider some passage of the *Passion* of our Blessed Lord; as for example, that, when he was bound to the Pillar. And here let the Understanding search out the cause of those great dolours and afflictions, which his Divine Majesty felt in that desolate condition; as also, many other things, which, (if the Understanding be good at working; or else, if he have Learning) one may easily be able to draw from thence. This is a manner of Prayer, wherein all are both to begin and proceed, and conclude; and it is a very excellent and secure way, till our Lord may perhaps, carry them on to other things which are supernatural. I say, *all*; though yet there be many Souls which profit more by other Meditations, than by that of the Sacred *Passion*. For, as there are many Mansions in Heaven; so, many ways thither. Some profit themselves more by considering of Heaven, others of Hell; others by reflecting on Death; and some, if they be very tender-hearted, are too much troubled, if they always go ruminating upon the *Passion*; and regale themselves better, and profit more, by considering the Power and Greatness of God in his Works, and the Love he bears us; which they find to be represented to them in all his Creatures. And this is an admirable way of proceeding; but yet still we must neither forget, nor forbear to consider the *Life* and *Passion* of our Blessed Lord very often; that in fine, being the very thing from which all our good both ever did, and ever can arrive to us.

He, who is a Beginner, had need be careful to consider very well what that is, whereby he profits most; and to this purpose, he will have great need of a Directour, if he can meet with an experienced man; for if he be not so, he may err much by carrying a Soul on without either understanding her himself, or else letting her be understood by her self. For, as such Person cannot but know of how great merit it is for him to subject himself to a Directour: so he will not presume to depart from that, which the other shall direct. I have met with certain Souls which have been afflicted and streighned, because he, who had the instructing them, wanted experience; and I was heartily sorry for them; And some also I have seen, who knew not what to do with themselves, for they, not understanding the Spirit, afflicted both Body and Soul; and the while hindered

dered their own benefit. One of them told me once of a Directour of hers, who would not suffer her for eight years together, to pass on out of the consideration of the knowledg of her self; and yet our Lord bestowed on her the Prayer of quietude; and so she was in trouble enough.

And, though it be very true that this point of the knowledg of ones self is never indeed to be utterly given over; nor is any Soul in the way of Prayer to think she hath so much of the Gyant in her, as not to understand that many times she must turn Child, and suck again; and this must never be forgotten; and perhaps I shall also speak often of it again, in regard it imports so much; because there is no State of Prayer so high, wherein it will not be necessary to turn again often to the beginning. And this point of the knowledg of our selves, and of our sins, is the daily bread which must be eaten with all the meat (how delicate soever it may be) of such as are in this way of Prayer; yea & without this very bread, they will never be able to sustain themselves; Yet must even this be taken by weight and measure. For, when once a Soul finds her self subdued and low; and sees clearly that she hath no good thing of her own; and finds her self to be full of confusion and shame, even to appear in the presence of so great a King; and the little which she is able to pay him, for the very much which she finds her self to owe him; what necessity is there to spend more time upon this, but to apply our selves to such other things as our Lord may perhaps set before us, and which it will not be reason for us to refuse; since his Divine Majesty knows better than we, upon what it is convenient for us to feed.

So that it imports us very much, that the Directour be well advised; I mean that he be of good understanding and experienced; and if, with this, he be also learned, it will be of mighty importance. But yet, when all these three parts shall not chance to meet together, the two former import more than the third; because they may easily procure to consult with such as are learned, whensoever they shall have need thereof; but as for Beginners, learned men, if they practise not Prayer, can be of little profit to them. Yet I say not, that they should not treat, and confer with such men as are learned; for, as for a Spirit, which should not be first settled in a way of truth, for my part, I had rather have one without Prayer. For, Learning is a great matter, since it instructs us, who know little; and brings us light; and when we are acquainted with the truths of Holy Scripture, we begin to do that which we ought; but as for silly and foolish devotions, our Lord deliver us from them. I will declare my self yet better; for I fear I put my self upon too many things at once, though I ever wanted means to know how to give my

self to be well understood, (as I have said) save upon the expence of many words.

A Religious Woman, for examples sake, begins to use Prayer; and in case some simple person direct and govern her, he will, if the toy take him in the head, give her to understand that it is better for her to obey him, than her Superior; yea, and he will do it without any malice at all; as conceiving that he is in the right. And if he be Religious, she will be likely enough to think that he sayes true. And if she be a married woman, he will tell her that it is best for her, even when she ought to be about her House-hold businesses, to exercise her self in Prayer; though it were to the disgust of her Husband. So that she knows not how to dispose of her time, nor of her businesses in such sort, as that all may go according to reason and truth; because, in fine, that Directour wants light; and not having any himself, he cannot give it to others; though he would never so fain. And though, for this, it seem, that there is no great need of Learning; yet my opinion is, and ever will be, that all Christians shall do well to treat with such men about their Souls, as are well learned; and so much the more, so much the better; and they, who go by the way of Prayer, have yet more need than others to meet with such men; and so, the more they shall be also Spiritual, the better will it be for them still. And let none deceive themselves with saying, That learned men, without the exercise of Prayer, are not to the purpose for them who use Prayer; for I have dealt with many; and for some of these latter years, the more, because I found my self in more necessity: and I was ever much a friend of learned men; for, though some of them have not experience, yet they dislike not the Spirit, nor are ignorant of it; because they ever find by holy Scripture, wherein they are continually versed the truth of the good Spirit. As for me, I hold that a person, who exercises Prayer, and will treat with learned men, shall never be deceived by illusions of the Devil, if he have not a mind to deceive himself. For I believe that the Devils are exceedingly afraid of Learning, whensoever it is accompanied with Humility and Virtue; for they know they shall be discovered in the end, and so shall come to lose by the bargain.

I have said thus much, because I know there are opinions that learned men are not fit for persons of Prayer, unless they be also of Spirit. Already I have signified, that it is necessary to have a Spiritual Directour; but if he prove not learned, the inconvenience will be great; and it will be of much help to treat with learned men, so that they be virtuous; for, though they be not Spiritual (as, in this case, we understand Spiritual) they

they will yet be able to benefit us; and God will vouchsafe to enable them to teach us; yea, and so may perhaps, by degrees, make them also Spiritual; to the end, that they may be able to instruct us the better. And I speak not this without some experience; for this hath hapned to me concerning more than two. I say therefore, that if a Soul resolve to render it self entirely subject to the order of one Directour, she shall err very much, unless she procure in particular that he be learned; especially if she be a Religious of any Order: Because such an one is to be subject to their Prelate or Superior; to whom peradventure all those three aforesaid parts, which were said to be so necessary for a Directour, will be wanting, which will be no little crosse to the Party; besides the having also voluntarily submitted ones Understanding to that of another, who hath no very good one. At least, forasmuch as concernes me, I was never able to bring my self to it; nor indeed, do I hold it convenient.

But now, if the Party of whom we speak, be a Secular person, let him bless God, that himself may make choice of one to whom he will resolve to subject himself; and let him take care not to lose this virtuous liberty. Nay, let him even stay without any Directour at all, till he find a fit one; for, our Lord will not fail to provide him such an one, if he go wholly grounded in Humility, and a desire to make a fit choice. For my part I praise God very much; and we women, and such as are not learned, are alwaies to give God infinite thanks, for that there are some in the world, who take so great pains and trouble to attain the knowledg of the truth, which we unlearned persons are ignorant of. And it amazes me many times, to see learned men (especially Religious) with how much trouble they gain all that knowledg which is to bring me so much profit, without any more trouble of mine, than only to ask them the question; and yet that there are some who will not benefit themselves by it. But this, God forbid. I see them subject to the troubles and mortifications of a Religious Life, which are very great; with Penances; ill Diet; being subject in all things, to Obedience; the thought whereof doth put me sometimes into confusion, besides their hard lodging, perpetual labour, perpetual Cross; and me thinks it must be a great misery that any should lose so important a benefit by his own fault. It is possible that some of us, who are free from these austerties, whereof I speak, and feed upon what is dressed for us, and live at our easle, conceive that for the making a little more Prayer, we shall excel them who are subject to so great Penances. Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast made me so unprofitable and un-usefull; but yet I praise thee very much

that thou awakest so many, who may awake us. And we should do well to make continual Prayer for them who give us light ; for, what would become of us without them, in the midst of so great tempests as are now in the Church ? If some have been wicked ; thee good will shine the brighter by their means. I beseech our Lord to hold them up with his hand, and to help them that they may help us ; Amen.

I have travelled far out of the way, from that, which I was going to say, but, all is to the purpose for beginners ; to the end , that they may put themselves upon this so high a way , and may go on settled in the right way. Returning therefore to what I said in meditating upon *Christ* our Lord at the *Pillar*, it is good to discourse a while, and to think upon the pains which he felt there , and why he felt them ; and who it is that felt them, and the Love wherewith he felt them ; yet let not one weary himself awayes in seeking out this , but remain there with a quieted understanding. If he can, let him employ himself upon considering who looks upon him ; and let him accompany him ; and beg of him ; and humble himself before him ; and regale himself with him ; and in fine , let him remember that he deserves not to be there. Whensoever you shall be able to do this, though it should fall out to be at the very beginning of your exercising Prayer, you will find great benefit by it ; nay, many benefits are acquired by this manner of Prayer ; at leaft my Soul found it so. I know not whether I hit right in declaring my self ; your *Reverence* will consider of that ; I beseech our Lord , that I may hit right in everlastinglly pleasing him ; Amen.

C H A P. XIV.

She begins to declare the Second Degree of Prayer ; which is when our Lord is pleased to give the Soul more particular gifts ; and relates how they appear to be Supernatural.

Since now it is already declared with how much labour this Orchard is watered ; and how, by strength of arme the Water is to be gotten out of the Well ; we must say somewhat of that Second way of drawing up this Water which the Lord of the Garden hath ordained ; that by this artifice of the Wheel and Buckets the Gardner may draw out more water, and with les trouble ; and may be able to rest now and then ; and not be continually labouring. Now , this way being applied to Prayer,

Prayer, which is wont to be called *Prayer of Quiet*, is that, whereof now I will treat.

The Soul doth here begin to recollect and shut it self up. And it touches a little here upon the Supernatural; because the Powers thereof can by no means gain this it self, by all the diligences which it can possibly use. It is true, that sometimes she may seem to have wearied her self in turning round the Wheel, and labouring with the Understanding; and filling up the little Buckets; but here the Water is grown to be higher; and so she labours much less than she did in drawing it out of the Well. I say the Water is grown nearer to her; because Grace gives it self now to be more clearly known by the Soul. This is a kind of recollecting, and as it were, a shutting up of the Powers of the Soul within her self, that so she may be able to enjoy this contentment with more gust; But yet, the use of the Faculties is not lost, nor do they sleep; but only the Will is employed in such sort, that it is captivated it self knows not how; only it gives consent that God may imprison it as one who understands it is made Prisoner to its dear Beloved. O my dear Jesus and my Lord! of how much worth is thy love to us in this case, since it holds our love fast in so strong chaines, that it leaves us not liberty at that instant to love any other thing than thy self? The other two Faculties which are the Understanding and Memory, assists the Will for preparing its self to enjoy so great a good; although now and then it happen, that, being united with the Will, sometimes disassist it much. But in this case let not the Will make any account of them, but remain still in her joy and quiet. For, if she shall strive to recollect those other Faculties, both they and she will lose by it. For they are then as so many Doves, who content not themselves with the food which the Lord of the Dove-House presents to them without their labouring for it; but go to seek it in other places; though yet they soon find it so bad, that they quickly return again, and so come and go to see whether the Will may be brought to bestow any part of that upon them which it self enjoys. And if our Lord please to cast them any Food, they stay; and if not, they go again to seek it; and all this while, they conceive that they are of use and benefit to the Will; though yet sometimes both the Memory and Imagination (even whilst they have a desire to represent that better to her, which she enjoys) fall out to do her hurt in stead of good. Let her therefore be content to carry her self so towards them, as I shall here advise; since all that which passes here, is of extream consolation; and is obtained with so little labour, that Prayer never wearies one, though it chance to last very long; because the Understanding works now at

great leisure ; and walks as it were foot by foot ; and brings up a much greater quantity of water than formerly it drew out of the Well ; and the tears which God gives in this case flow with great joy ; which howsoever we feel, yet we procure them not.

This Water of the great Blessings and Favours which our Lord shews us here, makes our Vertues increase incomparably more, than the other of the former Degree of Prayer did ; because now, the Soul is already beginning to be exalted from her own misery ; and already grows to have some small notice of the gusts of Glory. And this, I think, makes her thrive, and improves so much the more ; as also to approach nearer to that true vertue, from whence all vertues proceed, which is God; because his Divine Majesty now begins to communicate himself to that Soul ; and is also pleased that she should find in what sort he communicates himself to her. In arriving once to this, she instantly begins to lose the appetite of all things concerning this world ; and I cannot blame her ; for already she sees very clearly, that one moment of that gust is not to be purchased here ; and that no riches , or dominions , nor all the honours or delights of this world , are able to give such contentment and satisfaction as this , though it were but for the twinkling of an eye ; because this is true contentment , and such an one as we really see and find to content us indeed. For , as for those others of this world , it may well go for a wonder , if we can so much as tell , even wherein the contentment of any thing doth consist. Nor doth there ever fail to be a Yea, and No, in any of them ; but here all is Yea so long as it lasts ; and the No, or disgust, comes afterwards ; because then they see that it is ended ; and that they cannot recover it again ; nor know indeed how to go about it. For, though one should even half kill himself with Penances and much Prayer, and use, in fine, all other possible diligences ; yet will it all serve to very little purpose, unless our Lord vouchsafe to impart it. God is pleased here for his own greatness, that this Soul should now understand that his Divine Majesty vouchsafes to be so near her, that now there is no need of sending any messengers to him, but only, that she herself may speak with him ; & that, not by words, because then he is already so near her, that even by the very least stirring of her lips he understands her.

It may chance seem impertinent for me to talk after this manner , in regard we know well enough that our Lord doth ever hear us , and is ever present with us ; and there can be no doubt at all , but that this is true. But yet here this Emperour and Lord of ours is pleased that we should also understand, that he understands us ; and what his presence is able

able to do; and what he will particularly begin to work in our Souls, in the great, both interiour and exterior satisfaction which he imparts; and in the vast difference which (as I have said) there is, between this kind of delight and gust, and all the other of this world. For this seems even to fill all those vacuities which by our Sins we have made in our Souls. And this so great satisfaction is in the most intimate part thereof; and she knowes not how, nor by what means it comes; nay many times she cannot tell even what to do, nor what to ask, no nor what to wish. For, the Soul seems there to find all good things together; and she doth not very well know even what she hath found; nor can I tell how to give it to be understood. For there would here be need of Learning for many purposes; and here would it come very well in to explain the difference betwixt *General*, and *Particular*, *Succours of Grace*, whereof many are ignorant; And that our Lord in this Prayer, is pleased that our Soul should see this particular *Succour* as it were with her eyes; and for many other things also, which may perhaps be mistaken; but since understanding perfons are to see what I write, who will discerne if it have any error in it, I am in the less pain and care; considering, that both as to Learning and Spirit, this goes into the hands of such as will both understand it, and will blot out also any such thing, as may have been ill said.

Yet I would fain give this to be understood, because these are the beginnings; and when our Lord disposes himself first to do these Favours, the Soul her self doth not understand them; nor doth she know what to do with her self. For, if God conduct and guide her by the way of fear, as he did me, the trouble is very great; unless there be some at hand, who can understand her. But then, it is a great gust for her to see her self well described by them; for then she evidently findes her self to be in that way; and it is also of great benefit to know what one hath to do in any of these States or Degrees, that so they may go on with profit. For my part, I endured much, and lost a great deal of time, because I did not know how to carry my self. And therefore I have very great compassion of those Souls which find themselves alone when they are come thus far; for though I have read many Spiritual Books, and though they touch upon that which is to the purpose, yet are they very short in declaring themselves; and unless the Soul be very well exercised in Prayer, though they should express themselves at large, she shall have enough to do to understand them.

I could very much desire that our Lord would do me the favour that I might know how to set down the effects which these things that begin
alrea-

already to be Supernatural, use to work in the Soul ; to the end , that it might be understood by these effects when it is the Spirit of God. I say, that it might be understood; according to what we can here understand, though it will alwayes be very well done to go on with circumspection and fear. For, though it be indeed of God , yet the Devil can tell how to transforme himself somtimes into an Angel of Light ; and if a Soul be not well exercised in Prayer, she will not understand it ; and indeed, to be exercised well enough to understand this point, as it deserves, the Soul must be arrived to the highest Degree of Prayer.

The little time I have, will allow me no great help, for what I design ; and therefore his Divine Majesty had need to do it himself ; for I must concur in all things with the Community ; and have many other busynesses to do ; since I am at this present in a House, which is but new set up , as I shall shew afterward ; and therefore, I write this without any such rest, and quiet, as were convenient ; so that I must do it by little and little. But I could wish more leisure ; for, when ever our Lord gives a spirit, things are easily, and much better expressed. And it seemes to be, as when one hath an Originall, before him ; and then he may easily take out the Copy. But if the Spirit be wanting, it is no more easie, to explain it, than if it were Arabick as they lay, even though we should have exercised our selves many years in Prayer ; and therefore , methinks, it is of very great advantage when I write, if I be then actually in Prayer ; for I see clearly, that it is not I, who say it, nor who order it then with my Understanding, nor yet know I afterward , how I so declared it ; and this happens to me very often.

But now, let us go-back to our Orchard, or Garden, and see, how these Trees begin to button, and bud-out towards flowring, that they may afterward yeild fruit ; and how these Gilly-flowers, and other odoriferous Plants , dispose themselves , to give delight-ful Scent to the Owner. This Comparison pleases me much ; for, many times , in my beginnings (and I humbly beseech our Lord, that even yet I may have been a beginner to serve his Divine Majesty) I say , in those beginnings of what I shall say afterward of my Life, it was much delight to me, to consider , that my Soul was a Garden, and our Lord that walked in it ; and I humbly Prayed him to increase the odour of those little young Flowers of Vertue, which shewed in appearance a desire to sprout ; and that also they might serve for his Glory ; and that he would be pleased to sustaine them , since I desire nothing for my self ; and that he would also dresse , and prune those he pleased ; for already

I knew well that they would thrive, and grow the better afterward. I say, that he would cut and prune them; in regard that some such times arrive to the Soul, wherein is no appearance left of this Garden at all; but then all seemes to be withered, and dry, and that there never will come more Water, to sustain it; yea, and that there also seemes never to have been any vertue in that Soul. In this case it undergoes great affliction; because our Lord is pleased, that the poor Gardner should then conceive, that all that care, which he had formerly employed in dressing and improving his Garden, is lost. Then is the true time of plucking-up, and rooting-out, all those little Weeds, which, till then, have remained there, how small soever they be; and to know, that no diligence of ours will serve, if God take the Water of his Grace from us; and to hold this poor miserable Nothing of ours, in no manner of account; yea and, even for less than nothing. Here great Humility is gained, and the Flowers will thus begin to refLOURISH.

O thou, my *Lord*, and my *Good*! for I know not, how to say this without tears, and a great joy, of this poor Soul of mine, that thou art pleased to remain thus with us. Yea, and thou remainest in the *B. Sacrament*, which may well be with all truth believed, because so it is; and we may, with much truth make this Comparison; and, if it be not through our own fault, we may enjoy our selves together with thee; yea, and thou also rejoice to be with us, since thou declarest, *That thy delight is, to be with the Children of men*. O my *Lord*, what is this? For, whensoever I hear but this word, it is to me of great consolation; yea and was so, when I found my self in the worst condition. But is it possible, after this, O my *Lord*, that there should be, a Soul, which arriving to receive such Favours, and Regalo's at thy hands, and understanding, that thou rejoicest so highly in her, should yet return to offend thee, after the receiving of so many Favours, and so great demonstrations, of the love thou bearest her in such sort, as that it cannot possibly be doubted, since the effects do so manifestly declare it. Yes, it is most certain, that there is such a Soul, which hath so offended thee; and that, not once, but often; and I am this very Soul. And I beseech thy Divine goodness, O my *Lord*, that I may have been, the only ingrateful one who ever committed so high a wickedness, & who have been guilty of such an excessive ingratitude against thee; though yet already, even from this very misery of mine, thy infinite goodness hath been able to draw som advantage; yea, and even by how much the ill hath been greater, the great good of thy Mercies hath shined so much the more. But now, with how much reason, may I resolve to celebrate them for all eternity? I most hum-

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bly beseech thee, O my God, that it may be so ; and that I may sing
 ||Psal. 88. them to thee for ever,|| since thou hast vouchsafed to shew them so
^{Miseri-}
^{cordias}
^{Domini in}
^{eternum}
^{cantab.} highly, and so greatly, to me, that such as see it are amazed ; and, as for
 me, they force me very often, even out of my self, to praise thee so
 much the better : for that remaining in my self without thee, I could be
 fit, O my Lord, for nothing, but to return to be such a kind of Gar-
 den, as that, the Flowers being plucked-up, yet once again, this mis-
 erable earth of mine would return to be a direct dung-hill, as it was be-
 fore. To the end therefore, that I may praise thee the better, perm't
 not, I beseech thee, O my Lord, that this Soul may ever be lost, which
 thou hast bought with so many afflictions, and labours, and which thou
 hast so often re-purchased again and again, and taken out of the very
 teeth of that hideous Dragon.

I beseech your Reverence, excuse me, for speaking thus from the
 purpose ; and do not wonder at it, since it is, at least, to mine own pur-
 pose, to speak as I do. For, such are the apprehensions, and reflecti-
 ons of the Soul, when I write : And somtimes it goes hard to forbear
 to celebrate the praises of God, when the pen represents such things
 as expres the high obligations, which we have to his Divine Majesty.
 And I believe, that this will be no way displeasing to your Reverence ;
 for I am of opinion, that we may, both of us, sing one Song, though
 yet, after a different manner ; because it is much more, which I
 owe to Almighty God, than you do ; in regard that he hath pardoned
 ed me more Sins, as your Reverence knows very well.

C H A P. X V.

*She prosecutes her Discourse of the same matter ; and gives some advise
 how persons are to carry themselves in this kind of Quiet Prayer.
 She declares how that many Souls come to arrive to this Degree of
 Prayer ; and that few passe beyond it.*

D **L** Et us now return to our purpose. This Quietnes and Recollecti-
 on of the Soul is easily perceived by the satisfaction and peace which
 is infused into her, with a very great contentment and calmnes of the
 Powers of the Soul, and a very sweet delight. And now it seems to her
 (because she is not come yet any further) that already she hath nothing
 left

left to desire ; and that with a very good will she could make the same request with St. Peter , That her *aboad might be ever there*. She dares not stir or move ; nay she would hardly give her self leave so much as to take her breath, for fear lest so that Good should fly away out of her hands, And the while, the poor Soul understands not, that as by her own power, she could do nothing for the drawing of that good to her self ; so is she of less ability to detain it there any longer than our Lord pleaseth. I have already declared , that in this first Recollection and Quiet , the Powers of the Soul fail not; but yet she is so fully satisfied with God, that as long as this time lasts , howsoever those two other Powers may discompose her, yet, the Will remaining united with God, that Quiet and calme rest is not lost, but rather by little & little the Will again recovers and recollects the Understanding and Memory. For, howsoever the said Will be not yet totally engulfed, yet is she so employed, without knowing how, that, how diligent soever they be, they know not how to deprive her of her contentment and joy ; but rather she goes helping her self, without any trouble at all of her own ; to the end , that this little spark of the Love of God, may not be quenched in her.

I beseech our Lord to afford me grace, that I may make this to be well understood ; for, there are many, yea very many Souls which arrive to be in this Degree or State ; and few which get beyond it ; and I know not who may be in the fault ; only I am sure enough, that there is none in God. For, since his Divine Majesty doth a Soul the Favour, that she may be able to arrive to this point , I cannot believe that he would cease to carry her much further , if it were not for some fault of her own. But now it imports the same Soul very much, that, when she arrives thus far, she well understand the great dignity wherein she is ; and the great Favours which our Lord hath done her ; and how , in all good reaon she were no longer to be of the Earth ; because it seems now already , that his goodness makes her an Inhabitant of Heaven , if it be not her fault ; and wretched shall she be, if she turn back; and I believe it would be then to go down low enough ; as I was going , if the mercy of our Lord had not made me turn yet back again. For the most part , in my opinion, such thing happens for very grievous faults of their own ; nor is it possible for any to quit so great a good, without the apparent blindness of some very great ill. And therefore I beseech for the love of our Lord, those Souls to whom his Majesty hath done so great a Favour as to make them able to reach this State, that they will know , and hold themselves in great account, with an humble and holy presumption , that so they may never return again to the Flesh-Pots of Egypt. And yet ,

that, if through their weakness, and wickedness, their naughty and miserable condition, they should chance to fall back, as I did, they will ever be yet representing to themselves the great good which they have lost; and grow into suspicion, and walk with Fear; (as they have really great cause, thereof, that, if they return not to Prayer, they shall be sure to go from bad to worse; for, this indeed do I call a true Fall, when one comes once to abhor that very way whereby they purchased so great a good; and with such Souls I am not speaking; that I say not, that they must never offend God, nor commit any Sin; though yet it were but reason, that whosoever had begun to receive such Favours as these, should be very careful to keep themselves from committing any; But in fine, we are miserable Creatures; only that which I advise very earnestly, is, that they will not give over their Prayer; for there shall they come to know what they are doing; and there shall they gain sorrow from our Lord; and strength to rise again. And let that Soul believe, (believe I say) that if she depart from Prayer, she in my opinion runs a great hazard. I know not whether I apprehend right what I say; but at least I judge by my self.

This kind of Prayer then is a certain Spark of the true Love of Him; which our Lord begins to kindle in a Soul; and his pleasure also is, that the same Soul shall understand what kind of thing this Love is, and what Regalo and delight it brings. This Quiet and Recollection, and little Sparke, if indeed it be of the Spirit of God, and not a gust, either given by the Devil, or yet procured by our selves; (though yet one, who hath experience, cannot possibly but understand at the very instant that it is no such thing as can be acquired; save that even our very Natural condition is so greedy of all that which is savoury, that we will needs try all) but we quickly grow again to be very cold; And, how much forever we our selves may begin to make this Fire to burn, for the procuring of this gust, we seem indeed only to cast on water enough to quench it. But as I said, this little Spark of Divine Love, conveyed by God into the Soul, how small soever it be, makes a great noise; And, if the Soul do not quench it by her own fault, this proves that which begins to kindle a huge Fire, and sends forth great flames from it self (as I shall declare in fit place) of that strongest love of God, which his Divine Majesty is graciously pleased that perfect Souls should enjoy. And this very spark is a certain signal, and pawn which his Divine Majesty gives to that Soul, to shew that he chooses her out for great things, if she will make her self fit to receive them. I say, this is a mighty gift, far greater than I am any way able to express. And it is matter of much grief to me, that (as I was

was saying) I know many Souls, which arrive thus far, and that yet there are so very few which pass further, (as they ought to pass) that I am even ashamed to confess it. I say not, that there are so very few who pass on further; for it may very well be, that there are many; for God doth not sustain us for nothing; but I only speak of such as I have seen.

For my part, I would earnestly wish them, not to hide their Talent, since, it seemes, God chooses them out for the profit of many others; and especially in these times, when it is so necessary, that his Divine Majesty should have some strong friends, to support and uphold such as are weak. And let them all, who find that they have received this great favour at our Lord's hands, esteem themselves for such, if they know, how to correspond well with the Laws, which a firm, and fast friendship even of this very world requires. And, if not, let them apprehend very much, and fear, that they shall do themselves a great deal of hurt; yea, and I pray God it be to none but themselves.

That, which the Soul is to do, in these times of enioying this Quiet, is only to rest with suavity, and without noyse. I call it *noyse*, with; the Understanding to go seeking many words, and considerations, to give thanks for this benefit; and to collect a mighty heap of her defects, and sins, to shew, that she deserves not this Favour. For all, this is now in motion; and the Understanding represents many things; and the Memory is restless; so that really these Powers give me at times trouble enough; and, though I have but a weak Memory, I cannot subdue it. Let the will then at this time with a calmnes and gravity know, that she is not to negotiate with God by strength of arme, And that such discourses be indeed no better, than as so many great logs of wood, which are laid on with small discretion, to quench that little Spark. And let her know, and say with great humility: *O Lord, what am I able to do here? What hath this Slave, to do, with her Lord? and Earth with Heaven?* Or else, she may use such other words, as shall present themselves then, in the way of Love; well grounded in the knowing that to be true, which she faith.

Now, as for that, which concerns the Understanding, let her not heed it at all, which makes a troublesom noise; and, if the will needs give it part of that which she enjoys, or shall labour to recollect it, (For, many times it is seen, that, during this Union, and repose in the Will, the Understanding is still much out of order) it will not prove well: better it is to let it alone, than that she. (I mean, the Will) should still go hunting after it. But let her remain enjoying that

Favour, and recollection, like a wise Bee ; for, if no one of the Bees, should go into the Hive, but all be gadding abroad, so to be still fetching one another home, there would little store of hony be made. And so, a Soul will lose very much, if she be not well advertised of this ; and especially, if the Understanding be quick, and sharp. For, if once such an one begin to put discourses in order, and light upon some pretty reasons to the purpose, she will, if they be handsomly sayd, begin to think, that she performes some great exploit. But, the discourse, which is to be used here, must be a knowing clearly, that there is no other reason at all, why God should do us so great a Favor, than his own only goodness ; and to consider, that we are now approached so near to him ; and to beg Favours of him ; and to beseech him for his Church, and for such, as have recommended themselves to us ; and for the Soules in *Purgatory* ; and this, not by the noise of words, but only by a feeling desire to be heard, by his Divine Majesty.

This is a prayer which comprehends very much ; and we shall obtain more thereby, than by multiplying much rowling discourse by way of the Understanding. But let the will stirr-up her self, by some reasons, which will easily represent themselves to her then, when she finds her self to be so very much improved ; to quicken her Love, and let her perform certain amorous acts, of how great things she would be glad to do for one, to whom she owes so very much : without admitting, as I said the understanding to make a noise, in the search, of high and mighty matters. For, here, any poor straws, presented, and offered up with humility (and they will prove les than straws, if we bring them) will make a great deal more to the purpose, and will help to kindle a good fire sooner than a great quantity of bigg loggs of wood, will be able to do : I mean, very learned reasons, which, in my opinion, will choak the fire in an instant.

This is good for learned men, who command me to write all this ; for, through the goodness of God, it may be hoped, that all of them arrive hither ; and it might perhaps, so happen amongst them, that this time may pass away in applying some places of Scripture. But, though such knowledge could not fail to be useful to them, both before and after, yet, at these very times of Prayer, there would be little occasion to use it, in my opinion ; unless they had a mind to cool the fervorous employment of the Will. For, the understanding findes it self then to posse such an excessive kind of clarity, by being so neer to the Light it self, that even I (as poor, and miserable, as I am) seem to be another kind

kind of Creature. . And it is most certainly true, that it hath hapned to me, being in this Quiet, and without understanding, in effect, any thing of the Prayers, which are recited in Latin, and especially of the *Psalter*, that not only I understand the Verse in *Spanish*, but I passe also further on, and delight my self highly in considering, what the meaning of that *Spanish* is. I speak not here what it might import, If such persons were to preach, or teach others ; for then it would be fit to make use of that advantage, to help poor people, who know very little, like me. For, Charity is a very great matter ; and this continually improving of Souls ; so that it be done purely, for God.

But now, in these times of possessing this Quiet, let the Soul be suffered to remain in rest with her true repose, and let Learning be laid aside ; time will come afterward, when it will be held in so high account, that for no treasure, they would have advanced it, if it were but only for the power it gives them, to do more, and better service, to his Divine Majesty ; for it assists very much, in order to that excellent end.

But yet believe, me still, that here in the presence of that Infinite Wisdom, a little of the study of Humility, and one act of it, is more worth, than all the knowledge of the world. Here is no room for arguing, but only to know with truth, and plainness, what we are ; and to present our selves with great simplicity in the sight of God, who desires that the Soul should make her self, as very ignorant, and silly, as in very deed, she is, when once she comes to appear in his presence ; since his Divine Majesty descends so much below himself, as to endure her so near his own person ; we, being that, which we are.

The Understanding also is moved here to give certain thanks to God excellently ordered, and composed ; but the will, with a certain kind of Quiet and peace, and with a not daring, like the *Publican* in the *Gospel*, so much as lift-up her eyes, payes yet more retribution of thanks, than the understanding, perhaps, knows how to do, with the use of all its Rhetorick. In fine, we are not totally, in this case, to forbear to make Mental Prayers ; no, nor yet sometimes, to use some Vocal Words, if we will, and can. I say *can* ; because if the Quiet be great, one will hardly be able to speak, without much pain.

In my opinion, we may well understand, when this is of the Spirit of God ; and when it happens to be procured by our selves, upon the beginning of that devotion, which God gives us, and as I have said, we will needs of our selves, procure to passe on, to this Quiet of the will ; For, then, it works no effect at all ; but quickly ends, and leaves nothing but dryness behind it. And, if it chance to proceed from the De-

vil, a soul, which is exercised in this kind, will I believe, grow easily to understand it ; for, it leaves a disquiet, and little Humility, and an untoward disposition, in order to the producing of those effects, which the Spirit of God is wont to breed ; it leaves no life, in the understanding, nor a stability in the truth. Yet this will do a Soul, either very little hurt, or none at all, if she direct, and address the suavity, and delight, which then she feels to the glory of God ; and, if she settle her thoughts, and desires, upon him, as I have formerly advised, the Devil will gain little by the bargain. Nay, rather God will so dispose of things, that he shall lose much, even by that very delight, which he causes in the Soul ; for this very delight shall be a means, to make that Soul, which conceives that it proceeds from God, to come again, often to Prayer, with desire to receive more delight ; Or else, if the Soul be very humble, and not curious, nor very much interested in delights (though even they be spiritual) but indeed a true friend to the Crofs, she will make very little account of any gust, which the Devil can give her ; which yet she shall never be able to do, if, indeed, it be the Spirit of God ; for, in that case, she will ever be sure, to hold it, in very high account. Now, when the Devil propounds such a busines, (since he is all made of Lyes) and sees a soul abase, and humble her self, by means of that delight, and gust, received (for, indeed, we are to have very great care, to procure to prove very humble, upon all the occasions of Prayer, and gusts) the Devil will not return to tempt us very often, when he considers, how much he loses by the endeavour.

For this, and many other considerations, did I advertise, in the First Decree, & State of Prayer (which answers to the First way of drawing Water, in the Garden) that it is a principal busines, when the Soul is entring first, upon Prayer, to begin to unty her self, from the desire of all kind of sensible contentment ; and to enter with this only resolution, to help our Lord J^sus, to carry his Crofs ; like good Cavaliers, who are resolued to serve their King without pay, since they are most sure of them. We are still to carry our eyes, upon that true, and everlasting Kingdome, which we pretend to pursue.

It is a very great point, to have this ever in view, especially in the beginnings ; for afterwards, it is seen so clearly, that it may rather be fit to forget it ; to the end, that we may be able even to live ; than procure to be remembred, that this world is to last very little ; and that all, in fine, is nothing ; and that here the ease and rest, which we can have, is to be esteemed for nothing. This may seem to be a very poor and low consideration ; and so indeed it is; for they, who have arrived

rived to more perfection, would take it for an affront, and within themselves, would be ashamed if they thought, they forsook the goods of this world, because these must come once to have an end. For, although those goods were to last alwaies, they would yet rejoice to leave them for the love of our Lord ; and still, the more perfect they were, they would rejoice so much the more ; yea, and the more also, the longer they believed, these goods were to last. In these men Love is already grown-up to strength ; and it is this, which works most ; but for such as are but Beginners, it is a point of highest importance, and they must, by no means, hold it for low) to be content, to leave all gusts, for God. For, the benefits which are gained by this consideration are great ; and therefore do I advise it so much. Nay, even those others, who are most elevated, and accomplished in Prayer, will have need also of such considerations, as these. And there are times, when God will try them ; and that it will seem, that his Divine Majesty doth forsake them. For (as I have said already, and I would fain not have it be forgotten), the Soul in this life, which we live, increases not, as the Body doth ; though yet we say so ; and really it doth encrease ; but yet a Child, after he is grown, and become tall, and proves to be already a man, returns not to decrease again, and have a little body. Yet, now in the point of a Soul, our Lord will have it be otherwise, by what I have seen of my self ; for, I know it not in respect of others ; and it ought to humble us, for our own greater good, and that we may not be negligent, as long as we shall be in this banishment ; since, he who is highest in virtue, ought to fear himself more, and to trust himself less. The times may come, when even they who have their Will so conform to the Holy will of God, that they would rather be tormented, and endure a thousand deaths, than swerve the least from it. Certain times I say, may come, when they shall see themselves so assaulted by temptations, and persecutions, that to the end they may not commit gross sins, they will have need to make use of the first weapons of Prayer, and return, to remember, and consider that all the world is finally to end ; and that there is a Heaven, and a Hell ; and to use such considerations as these.

But now, returning to what I was saying, a great foundation it is (for being freed from the fervors, subtleties, and gusts, which the Devil is wont to give) to begin with a firm purpose at the very first, to walk in the way of the Cross ; and to desire no such thing, as gusts ; since our Lord himself shewed this way of perfection ; by saying, *Take thou up thy Cross and follow me.* For, he is to be our Pattern ; and whosoever shall follow his counsels, and that, for no other reason than to con-

tent him, may be sure, he shall have nothing to fear. And by the profit, they find in themselves, they will easifly come to know, that the Devil had no hand therein; and though they should even return to fall again, there will yet remain one sign, that our Lord had been there: which is, That they will quickly rife again; besides these others, which I shall now declare.

When it is the Spirit of God, there will be no need at all, to go in Quest after certain reasons, to draw humility, and confusion from thence. For, our Blessed Lord himself is wont to impart it, in those cases, after a very different manner, from that, which our selves can procure, by any petty considerations of our own; all which are nothing in comparison of a certain true Humility, with a light which our Lord teacheth us here; which breeds such a confusion in us, as even doth entirely defeat us. And the knowledge, which God is wont to give us, that we may perfectly understand, that we have no good at all of our selves, is a thing very sufficiently perceived; & still so much the more, as we receive the higher Favours. It also imparts to a man a very great desire to proceed in Prayer; and he will not give it over, for any trouble which may possibly succeed to him. He offers himself, and is ready to incur all things. He hath also a kind of assured hope, that he shall be saved; though yet still, not without humility, and fear. By this time, he also instantly forsakes all kind of servile fear, in his Soul; and it gives a great growth to a Filiall fear, instead thereof. He sees, that now he begins to bear a certain love towards God, which is far from any interest of his own; and he covets times of Solitude, that so he may have the better opportunity to enjoy that good. Insine, (that I may not weary my self too much) this is a direct beginning of all good things; a State, wherein the Flowres are now upon the very point to blossome.

And all this the Soul sees very clearly; and can by no means at that time conceive but that God is with her, till such time as she returns to find her self with faylings and imperfections towards him; for then she fears all things; and it is fit that she do so: Though yet there are Souls in the world to which it yields more benefit to believe for a certain truth that it is God; than all the fear in the world is able to give them. For, if the Soul in her self be apt to be enamoured, and grateful, the memory of that great Favour which God did her, is of more power to make her return to his Divine Majesty, than all the torments of Hell, which they can possibly be ever able to represent. At least (as wicked as I am) it hapned after this manner to me. As for the signes of a good Spirit, because I shall speak of them hereafter more at large (since it hath

hath cost me so much trouble of many kinds, to be able to describe them clearly) I omit it now ; and I believe, that, with the favour of our Lord, I may be able to hit right in this kind ; for , (besides the experience which I have, whereby I came to understand many things) I know this matter by means of some learned men, who, indeed are very learned; and of some persons also who are very holy : to whom it is great reason to give belief. And therefore, let not other Souls be so much afflicted and vexed as I have been ; when once, through the goodness of God, they shall come so far as to find themselves in his State.

CHAP. XVI.

She treats of the Third Degree of Prayer, and goes declaring some very high points ; and what a Soul, which arrives thus far, may be able to do ; and what effects these so great Favours of our Lord are accustomed to work.

Let us now come to speak of the Third Water, wherewith this Garden is watered ; this is a running Water of a River or Spring ; and it waters it with much less labour ; though yet the distribution thereof causes some. Our Lord will here so help the Gardiner, that in some sort he will be as it were the Gardiner himself, and, in effect, the Doer of all. This is a sweet repose, or sleep of all the Powers, which are yet neither totally lost, nor yet do they know how they work. This quiet and delight, and suavity is greater, beyond all comparison than the former ; for, the Water of this grace ascends to the very throat of the Soul, in such sort, that now it cannot go forward, nor knows how to do it ; nor yet would by any means return backward ; but enjoyes an excessive kind of glory. It is, as when a man is already with the *Holy Candle* in his hand ; so that now, there wants very little of dying ; but it is of that death which is desired ; for, she is enjoying the greatest delight that can be imagined in that agony of hers, and, me-thinks, it is no other thing than even to dye, as it were, entirely, to all the things of this world, and to be enjoying God. For my part, I can think of no other termes wherewith to express it, or declare it ; nor knowes the Soul at that time what to do ; nor, whether she should speak or be silent ; or laugh, or weep. It is a glorious kind of Frenzie ; and a Celestial Folly where yet true Wisdom is learnt ; and it is a most delightful manner of the souls en-

O 2 joy.

joying in a Superlative Degree. It is it may be about some five or six years since first our Lord vouchsafed to allow me this kind of Prayer often, and in great abundance ; and that I neither did perfectly understand it, nor could declare it ; and so for my part, I made account when I was come hither, to say very little or nothing of it. I well understood that this was not an entire Union of all the Powers of the Soul ; and that it was clearly more than might be found in the former Degree of Prayer ; and yet withal, I must confess, that I could not tell, and exactly determine what the difference was. But I well believe, that, for the humility which your Reverence hath shewed in being desirous to help your self by so great a simplicity as mine, our Lord gave me this Prayer this day, immediately after my receiving the *B. Sacrament* ; without being able to go further, and put these Comparisons into my head, and taught me the manner, how to express them, and what the Soul is to do in these cases ; so that I was amazed at it ; and I understood all this at an instant. Many times I was, as it were, out of my self, and as if I had been even inebriated with this love ; and yet I could never understand, how it was ; only I knew very well that it was God ; but I could not tell the manner, how he wrought in me at that time. For it is truth, that the Powers are, as it were, all united, though yet not so engulfed, but that still they work ; and I have been extreamly joyed, that at length I am come to understand it ; and Blessed be our Lord for ever, who hath regaled me in so high a degree. These powers have only now ability, to busie themselves totally, upon God ; nor doth it seem, that any of them now, even dare so much as hover, or stir, nor, as it were, breath, if we do not seek to divert our selves with great endeavour ; yea & even so me-thinks, we can scarce do it entirely, at that time. A multitude of words, are spoken here in praise of God, but yet without any order, unles our Lord himself be pleased to order them ; for, at least, the Understanding serves here for nothing. The Soul would fain cry out, in praise of God ; and she is then, in such condition, as that she knows not, how to contain her self ; and perceives a savory kind of disquiet. Now, now the Flowers open themselves, to blossom ; and already they begin to yeild their odour. Here the Soul would be glad, that all the world might see, and understand her glory, that so, God might be praised ; and that they might assist her therein ; and that she might afford them part of her joy ; as not knowing, how to enjoy it all, her self. Me-thinks, she is now like her in the *Gospel*, who had a mind, to call-in all her Neighbours. Me-thinks, the admirable Spirit of the Royal Prophet *David* might feel some such thing in him.

himself, as this, when he played upon his Harp, and sung in honour and praise of Almighty God. I find my self very much devoted to this Glorious King; and I wish, that all the world were so; especially all we who are Sinners.

Good God! What a kind of thing is a Soul, when she finds her self in such a condition, as this? She would fain become all Tongue, to praise our Lord. She utters a thousand holy impertinencies; endeavouring all wayes to please him, who possesseth her in that manner. I know a certain person, who, though she were no Poet, yet did she happen to make certain passionate Verses, *ex tempore*, in the way of complaint, and declaring well her pain; not made by her Understanding, but only for the better enjoying that glory which gave her so delightful a paine, sweetly complaining thereof to her God; She wishes, that both her Body and Soul might be all torn asunder and opened to shew the joy she feels in this paine. What torments could then be set before her, which she would not be glad to endure, for the love of her Lord? She clearly sees, that the Martyrs did very little on their parts, when they suffered torments; for, the Soul knowes then very well, that the strength comes to her, by some other way, than from her self.

But now, what pain will she feel, to come back to resume her senses, so to live againe in this world; and to return to the cares, and complements thereof. For certainly, me-thinks, I am far from having exaggerated any thing concerning this manner of joy, which our Lord is pleased to make a Soul possesse, even in this place of banishment; but all that, which I have laid of it, is very poor and mean, in comparison of what it is. Blessed be thou for ever, O Lord; and let all things praise thee, for ever; And be pleased, O my King, (I most humbly beseech thee) that, since, when even now I write this, I am not wholly out of this holy Celestial Frenzy, or folly, (which through thy goodness, and mercy, and so utterly without any merit of mine, thou dost me the Favour to impart,) either all such persons as I shall have occasion to converse with, may be come even such fools for thy love; or else, dispose thou so of me, as that I may never converse more with any; or finally, O Lord, give order, that I may have nothing to do in this world; or, take me out of it. For now already, O my God, this Servant of thine is no longer able to endure so great afflictions, as she feeleth to come upon her, by her being without thee. And if she needs must live, she desires to have no ease in this life; nor do thou give her any. This Soul would faine see her self at liberty; it is death to her, to eat; she is afflicted by sleep; she finds, that this life would be spent in Regalo's; and that

now, there is nothing, but thy self, that can indeed regale her ; So that it seemes, she lives now against nature, since now she would faine not live in her self, but only in thee.

O thou my true Lord, and my Glory ! how delicate, and yet how heavy is that Crofs, which thou haft prepared for such, as arrive to this State ? It is delicate, because it is incredibly sweet ; and heavie, because there are vissitudes, when there is not patience enough, to enable us to endure it ; and yet the Soul would never desire to be free from it, unlesse it were, that she might find her self once to be with thee. When she remembers, that she hath never done thee service, in any thing; and that, by continuing to live, it may perhaps, be possible for her to serve thee, in somethng she would be glad, to lye under a yet more heavie burthen ; yea, and also never to dye, even till the end of the world. She values not any manner of repose, in comparison of doing thee any poor little service ; nor doth she know what to desire ; but she is sure of this, that she desires nothing but thy self.

O my Son (for you, to whom this is directed, and who have commanded me to write it, are so humble, that you will needs be called, by that name) let these things be only for your self, wherein you see, that I transgresse my limits ; for there is not that which suffices to keep me from leaving reason, when our Lord is pleased to draw me thus out of my self. Nor do I know , or believe, that it is I, who am speaking thus ever since I received the *B. Sacrament* this morning. Methinkes, I do but dream, of what I see ; and I would be glad not to see any other , than such as are sick of the same disease, which is now upon me. I humbly beseech your Reverence, that we may all become fools, for his love, who was content to be called so for the love of vs. And since your Reverence sayes, that you wish me so well, I desire, you will shew it, by disposing your self in such sort , as that our Lord may do you this Favour. For, I see there are very few men, who have not more wit, than they need, for the effecting such things, as concern them ; and perhaps, I may have more, of this than they all. But do not you suffer this, my dear Father, (since you are so, as well as my Son ; because you are my *Confessor*, to whose hands I have committed the care of my Soul) but unbeguile me, by telling me the truth ; though truths be now a-days seldom told. And now I would be very glad, that we *Five*, who at the present, love one another, in *Christ our Lord*; That I say, as others meet in secret, against the Service of his Divine Majesty, for the ordering of their wickednes , and their Heresies ; we also might procure somtimes to meet, for the undeceiving one

one another; and to confer, how we might reform our selves; and give God more gust. For, there is none that knows himself so well as others do, who look upon us; if it be with true love, and care of our amendment. I speak this as a Secret, and in your eare; for now, no such language, as this, is used; even Preachers themselves go so composing their Sermons, as that they may be sure to give men no disgust: Their intention being good, the work will be answerable to it; yet so, few grow to mend their lives: But how comes it to passe, that they are not very many, who give over their publique vices by meanes of those Sermons, which are made? Shall I tell what I think? It is, because the Preachers, are too wise. They are not possessed (this wisdom being laid aside) with that great fire of the Love of God with which the Apostles were; and so their flame gives but little heat. I say not, that I expect it now should be so great, as theirs was; but yet I heartily wish that it were greater, than I now find it. Your Reverence knows, in what it is, that very much consists; Namely, in having this life of ours in detestation; and honour, in very little esteem; and that, rather than fail to speak truth, and to maintaine it, for the glory of God, we would be as well contented to lose all, as to gain all. For, whosoever is resolved in good earnest, to hazard all for the love of our Lord, will be as well content with the one, as with the other. I say not, that I am any such Creature; but I heartily wish I were.

O great Liberty, to esteem it a captivity, to be bound to live, and converse according to the Lawes of this World! For, when this is once obtained, at the hands of God, there is not so base a Slave, as would not venture all; that, so he might redeem himself, and return home to his owne Country. And since this, wherein we are, is the true way; there is no cause, why we should loyter in it, For we shall never finish the gaining of so great a treasure, till we make an end of this life; may our Lord give us his grace, to do it well. Your Reverence, may tear this, which I have written here, if you think fit; and take it as a letter to your self, and pardon me, if I have presumed too far.

CHAP. XVII.

She prosecutes the same Argument, about this Third Degree of Prayer ; And finishes the declaration of the effects, which it works ; And declares also, the Harm done by the Memory, and Imagination in this case.

I Have already spoken to some good proportion of this manner of Prayer, and of that which the Soul is to perform therein ; or rather of what God doth in her ; for now it is himself, who takes the office of Gardiner upon him ; and he will have her take her ease ; and only, that the Will accept of those Favours, which it enjoys ; and that she offer her self to go through with all that, which he, who is true Wisedome, shall be pleased to ordain ; for which purpose, there is really need of a great deal of courage. For, so great, is that joy, that sometimes it seems, there wants little or nothing for makeing the Soul go instantly out of the body ; and O what a happy death would that be ! Here, methinks, that comes in very well, which once was said to your Reverence, that you leave your self wholly in the Arms of God ; if he will carry you to Heaven, That you go ; If to Hell, there will be no torment there, so that you be with him, who is your totall good ; If instantly to make an end of this life, That you desire nothing else ; And yet , that you be as well pleased, if yet, he will have you live a thousand years. Let his Divine Maiesty dispose of you, as of a thing which is properly his own ; for, your Soul is now no longer yours, but it wholly belongs to our Lord ; and therefore you must be altogether v oyed of care. Now I say, that in so elevated, and high a Prayer, as this, she understands that she performs it without any weariness to the understanding ; for, when God gives this Prayer to a Soul, she is able to do all this ; yea, and other manner of effects, than these. Only methinks, she is as it were, amazed, to see our Lord perform the office of a good Gardiner, so well ; and is not pleased, that she should take any trouble or paines ; but only that she delight her self, in beginning to enjoy the odour of those Flowers. For in one such approach as this, (how little a while soever it may last) such a Gardiner this is (in fine, the Creator of the Water, and giving it freely without measure) that, what this poor Soul was not able to gather by the labour of tiring out her Understanding in twenty years together, this Celestial Gardiner doth it all, in one moment of time ; and the Fruit doth so grow,

grow, and ripen, that it is able, through the good pleasure of our Lord, to sustain the owner thereof, and to enable him to live upon the gain, he makes by it. Only, he gives not this Soul leave, to present of this Fruit to others, till such time, as she be grown strong, by what her self hath eaten of it ; nor must she squander it away, in giving taste of it. For so, (she not valuing the profit, which she might make by it, nor they paying her any thing for it, to whom she gave it) she comes to maintain, and feed them up at her cost, whilst her self by degrees is ready to dye of hunger. This will be well comprehended by such understandings, and they will know how to apply it better, than I can declare it ; and I do but tire my self. In fine, the vertues which are obtained in this Prayer remain so much stronger here, than in the Prayer of Quiet (whereof I spake before) that the Soul cannot be ignorant thereof. For she finds her self to be wholly grown, another kind of thing, than she was ; and she begins (she even scarce knows how) to act and work great things, by the odour, which the Flowers yield, of themselves. For now, our Lord is pleased, that they sprout, and open ; to the end, that she may know, she hath vertues ; though yet withall, she see very clearly, that she was not able to acquire, and get them ; but that the Celestial Gardiner was pleased to impart them to her, as it were in an instant. The humility also of this Soul is much greater, and more profound, than in the former Prayer ; because she sees more clearly, that her self did, neither much, nor little, but only consent, that our Lord might do her those Favours ; and she embrace them with her will.

To me it seems, that there is in this kind of Prayer, a very evident Union of the whole Soul with God ; save that, it also seems, that his Divine Majesty gives liberty to the Powers thereof, to understand, and enjoy abundance of what he works therein. Now, it happens sometimes, yea and many times, that the Will being thus united (that your Reverence may see, both that this may be, and may also be able to understand it, when you shall have it ; at least, the effect of it rendred me as it were dozed, and therefore I relate it here) we know, and understand, that the will is tyed-up, and bound, and in condition of enjoying. I say, we know that the Will remains in much Quiet, whilst yet, on the other side, the Understanding, and Memory, are so free, that they are able to treat of busynesses, and to attend to works of Charity. Now, though this seem to be all one with that, which was spoken of in the Discourse of Quiet Prayer, yet it is different. Because there, the Soul is in such case, as it would fain not stir, nor move it self, in that kind of Prayer, as enjoying the leisure and contemplation of *Mary* ;

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Whereas here in this Prayer, she can also act the part of *Martha*. So that she doth now, in effect, perform the offices, both of the *Active*, and of the *Contemplative* life, all at once; and is able to exercise her self, upon those busineses, and works of Charity, which are agreeable to her condition; and to read, though yet still such Persons are not absolutely Lords of themselves; and they understand well enough, that the greatest part of their Soul is somwhere else. It is just as if we were speaking with some one; and that withal, at the self same time, some other person were speaking to us in such sort, as that we were not entirely attentive, either to the one, or the other. It is a thing which is perceived very clearly, and gives great satisfaction, and contentment, whensoever it arrives; and it uses to be a very great preparation, and disposition, that whensoever may be had any Solitude, or exemption from busines, the Soul may instantly enjoy a very perfect quietness, and repose. This is as if a person received such a kind of satisfaction, and cessation of appetite in himself, as that he had no need at all to eat, but felt his stomach content; in such sort, as that he would not easily apply himself to tast, of what is set before him; but yet withall, that if he saw such meat as he liked, he would not forbear to eat of it. Just so doth the Soul, not satisfy her self, nor is contented with the meat of this world; because she finds that in her self, which gives her satisfaction, the far greater contentments, which she hath in God; and a desire to satisfy her desires; in her enjoyment, and aboad with him; and this is that, which she purues.

There is also, another kind of Union, which yet, is not so much as an entire Union, though it be greater than that, of which I was speaking before, and not altogether so great, as that of this Third Water; And your Reverence will be very glad (supposing, that our Lord shall bestow them all upon you, if you have them not already) to find it written thus, and directly to understand, what it is. For it is one kind of Favour, for our Lord to impart the Favour; and another, to understand, what grace and Favour that is; yea, and yet another, to be able to unfold, and declare how it is. And, howsoever it may seem, that there may no more than the First of these, be needful, for the keeping of the Soul from confusion, and fear, and for enabling it to go forward with more courage, in the way of our Lord, treading underfoot all the things of this world; yet is it a Favour of so great advantage to understand it, that it is reason, that he, should much praise our Lord, who hath it, and even he also who hath it not, because his Divine Majesty hath been pleased to give it to some other person, who is now alive, that he might do us good.

Now,

Now, this manner of Union, whereof I am speaking, happens many times; at least it pleases God, to do me this Favour, very often; and that God recollects the Will; yea and also, in my opinion, the Understanding; for then it discourses not, but is employed upon enjoying God; as one, who stands looking, and sees so very much, that he knows not indeed which way to look; for one thing takes away the sight of the other; and so, nothing makes any impression at all. The Memory remains free; and so also doth the Imagination seem to do; and this Imagination, when it findes it self thus all alone, (that is, without being controlled by the Understanding) it would make one wonder, to see, what a war it makes; and procures, to put all out of order. For my part, I am sure it tires me; and I much abhor it; and I often beseech our Lord, that if it must distract me after this manner, he will be pleased at such times to take it from me. And sometimes I presume to say thus to him: *When, O my God, is this whole Soul of mine to be entirely unites in thy praise; and not divided thus into pieces, without being so much as able to serve her self of her self.* Here I discern the mischief brought upon us by Sin; so subjecting us, that we cannot do what we so much desire; which is to be ever busied in God.

I say, this happens to me divers times, and one was this very day; and so I may the better remember it. For, I see my Soul, even dis-solve, and destroy her self, through the desire she hath to be wholly there, where she finds her self for the greater part, to be already; and yet, that this is impossible, because the Memory, and Imagination do still make such warr upon her, that they suffer her not to prevail; though they be not able to do her any hurt, in regard that the other Powers and Faculties are wanting; yet indeed, they do enough by the disquiet, they give. I say, that they do her no hurt; because, indeed, they have no strength; nor do they fix themselves in any one State. And in regard that the Understanding doth not help the Imagination, in that which it represents either more, or less, it cannot fasten upon any thing; but skips up and down, from one thing to another. And it is like those importunate, and unquiet little Gnats, buzzing by night here and there; for just so, are these Powers wont to go, from one thing to another. This Comparison seems to me to be exceeding proper; for, though these inferior Faculties have not strength, and means to do harm, yet are they troublefom enough to such as feel them. Nor do I know what remedy there is against this inconvenience; for, hitherto, God hath not enabled me to find any out; and, if he had, I would have been very glad to use it; for it torments me (as I said) very often. But

in this is our misery made apparent to us; and so also doth the power of God shine very clearly in it, since this Faculty of the Soul, which is loose, can put us to so much trouble, and so tire us, whilst yet those other, which are employed, and do attend so neer on his Divine Majesty, make us feel so much ease, and joy.

The last Remedy, upon which I have fallen, after my having wearied my self many yeares, is that, whereof I spoke, in Quiet Prayer; That we should make no more account thereof, than we wou'd of some Fool; but let it alone, with its impertinent Tale, whereto God only can impose silence. And since, in fine, it remaines to us here, in the nature of a Slave, we must be content to endure it, as *Jacob*, did *Lia*; for, our Lord doth us Favour enough, to let us enjoy *Rachel*. I say, that it remains as a Slave; by reason that it cannot draw the other Powers, or Faculties to it, how vehemently soever it may strive; but rather they draw it often to them, without any difficulty at all. Yea, and somtimes our Lord is pleased to haue pitty, to see even the imagination it self so very much disquieted, and lost, through desire to be in company with the other Faculties; and his Majesty is content, that it also should be burnt up in the fire of that Divine Taper, where those others are already even consumed to dust; having, as it were lost their Natural Being,whilst they supernaturally enjoy so great Blessings.

In all these wayes of this last Fountain Water, whereof I have spoken, the peaceful rest; and glory of the Soul is so great, that even the Body doth very manifestly participate of that joy, and delight; I say, it doth so, very manifestly; and the vertues also of the Minde, remain so encreased and strengthened as I have said.

It seems to me, that our Lord hath been pleased to declare these States of Prayer, wherein the Soul discernes her self to be, as far as it can be given to be understood here. And your Reverence shall do well to confer about it, with some such Spiritual person, (who may be learned) as shall have arrived thus far. And; if he tell you, that all is well, you may conceive that God hath said it to you; and esteem it as a great benefit from his Divine Majesty; for you will, in tract of time, rejoyce (as I have said) very much to understand in clear manner what it is; though, when our Lord gives you the grace to enjoy it, he allowes you not the Favour, to understand it; yet when his Majesty hath given you the first part, you will afterward, by your knowledge, and learning, come also by this meanes to understand it. Let him be adored, and praised throughout all Ages unto all Eternity. *Amen.*

C H A P . X V I I I .

She treats of the Fourth Degree of Prayer. She begins here to declare in excellent manner, the great dignity to which our Lord advances that Soul, which is exalted to this State.

Our Lord teach me Words to be able to say somewhat of the Fourth Water ; for I well discern , that I have need enough of his Favour herein ; yet more than I had in that of the last ; because in that aforesaid, the Soul doth find her self not as yet to be wholly dead ; though yet (we may very well say , she is already dead to the world :) but still (as I affirmed) she hath sufficient understanding left to know that she is still in it ; and to discern her Solitude ; and to serve her self of her exterior at least so far as by outward signs, to give that which she feels to be understood. In all that kind of Prayer, and in the manner also of it, which hath been described , the Gardiner labours to some proportion ; though yet in the Prayer of these latter kinds, his labour goes accompanied with so much joy, and such a happy kind of ease , as that , for his part, he finds no trouble at all in it ; for he perceives it not as Trouble , but as Glory ; and he would be glad that it might never end. But in this Fourth Degree or kind of Prayer, there is no perceiving at all, but only enjoying, without any distinct particular understanding what is enjoyed. He knows well enough , that a certain Good is enjoyed, where-in all good things are contained and shut up ; but yet this Good is not totally comprehended by him. All the Senses are taken up in this joy , after such sort, that no one of them is so dis-employed as possibly to be able to attend to any thing else , either in the interjour , or exterior way. Before a certain leave was given to these Powers, that they might (as I said) make some kind of demonstrations of the great joy they felt ; but here the Soul enjoys much more beyond comparison ; and can give her self also to be understood much les : Because there is no means left in the Body ; nor yet hath the Soul any at all wherewith to communicate that joy ; but all things would then be disturbance , and torment , and distraction from the entireness of her sweet repose : I say, the Soul is no way able to communicate the joy she hath , (if indeed there be an entire Union of all the Powers) for as long as that Union lasts ; and that, if she be able to communicate it, I say, there is no absolute Union. In what man-

ner this thing happens, which they call Union, and what the thing also is, I am not able to give to be understood. It is declared in that which they call *Mystical Theology*; but, as for me, I am not able so much as to name the terms. Nor do I know what that is which is called *Mind*; nor the difference between *Mind* and *Soul*; or *Spirit*; for to me all these seem to be but one; though yet the Soul now and then spring up even out of her self, as if it were a kind of fire which burns up into a flame; and sometimes increases with an impetuosity. Now this flame rises very much higher than doth the fire; but yet still, notwithstanding all that, it is no distinct thing, but the same flame still which is in the fire. Your Reverence will understand this matter by your learning; but, as for me I know not how to say it better. For my part, the thing which I pretend to declare, is, what the Soul finds and feels when it is in this Divine Union; as for the knowing what an Union in general is, it is every where understood well enough to be when two several things become one.

O my Lord! how good art thou? Blessed be thou for ever; and let all things praise thee, O my God, who hast been pleased to love us in such sort, as that we may be able to speak with truth of this kind of communication which thou vouchsafest to hold with Souls, even in this Banishment of ours; which although they be never so holy and good, yet is this latitude of liberality and magnificence of thine very great in proceeding with them after this manner, and in fine, all is thine own Majesty and Greatness, who givest according to what thou art. O infinite Bounty! how magnificent are thy works? They are able even to amaze any such person as hath not his Understanding so wholly employed upon the things of this world, as that he hath left himself no room for the knowing and considering such things as are real truths. But now, that thou shouldest be pleased to fasten such Soverain Favours upon Souls which have offended thee so much, doth really even make an end of my Understanding; and when I come to consider this proceeding of thine, I am unable to pass on any further. But indeed, what proceeding can there be that is not turning backward; since no Soul can give thee any tolerable thanks for so incomparable Favours? As for me, I help my self sometimes with speaking certain impertinencies; and it often happens to me, both when I come from receiving these Favours, and when also our Lord is beginning to impart them (for, as for the very time when I am enjoying them, I have already shewed that there is then no power at all to do any thing) that I express my self to his Divine Majesty much after this manner. *O Lord, consider well what thou dost; forget not so soon my*

my very grievous Sins ; and though thou hast forgotten them so far as to vouchsafe to forgive them, yet remember them also (I humbly beseech thee) so far as to make thee put some limits to those Favours thou bestowest. Power not, O my Creatour, so pretious a Liquor into so broken a Vessel ; since already thou hast seen how often I have scattered and spilt it. O lodge not such a Treasure as this, where the affection to all the consolations of this life, is not yet so totally lost and spent as it ought to be ; for, if thou do, it will be utterly wasted. How canst thou deliver the strength of this City, and the keys of its Fort into the hands of such a Cowardly Commander, who is likely not to fail to give the Enemy entrance upon his first Assaule ? Let not, O my Eternal King, thy love to me be so great, as that it should make thee put such pretious Jewels as these into hazard. To me it seems, O my Lord, that thou mayst give the world occasion hereby much to undervalue them ; since thou puttest them into the custody and power of a Creature so wicked, so base, so weak, so miserable, and of so little worth, that though I now begin to labour, that I may not utterly lose them through thy favour (which also hath no need to be little, considering what I am) yet am I not able to gain any other to thee by them. In fine, I am a Woman, and not a good, but a wicked one ; and it seems, that these Talents of thine are thus, not only hidden, but even quite buried, being put into so barren and unhappy a Soyle. Thou art not wont, O Lord, to impart such Greatnesses and Favours as these to any Soul, but when there may be hope that she will be able to gain many others to thy Service. And thou knowest, O my God, already, that I have several times begged, and still beg it of thee with my whole heart, and with the entire affection thereof ; and I am resolved to be content to lose the highest blessing which can possibly be enjoyed upon earth, so that thou wouldest vouchsafe it to some other, who will profit more by it ; that so thy glory may be increased.

These, and other things hath it occurred to me to utter many times ; but yet afterward I perceived mine own great folly herein, together with my little humility ; for, our Lord knows very well what is fittest for every one ; and that there was not strength enough in my Soul for her to be saved, if his Divine Majesty had not enriched her with so great Favours.

And now I mean to declare the graces and effects of this Prayer which remains in the Soul ; and what that is which she can do of her self ; and whether she may any way contribute towards the attaining to this high State. It happens, that this Elevation of the Spirit, or Union, come both of them with a Celestial kind of Love. For (according to my understanding) this Union is different from Elevation in the same Union.

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Whosoever hath not tried this last, will be of a different conceit; but yet in my opinion, though it should be all one, our Lord works therein after a different manner; And for the increase which the Soul hath in untying her self from the love of all Creatures, it seems to be very much greater in this *Flight* and *Elevation* of the *Spirit*. And I have clearly seen, that this is a distinct Favour, although the things themselves may be all one, as I say; or at least it seem so. But a small fire is as truly and really Fire, as a great one; and yet still we see difference enough between the one, and the other; for, before a little iron can be made red hot in a small fire, a good space of time will be spent; but now, if the fire be great, the iron, though it be also greater, will lose the appearance of iron very quickly. Just so doth it seem to me to happen in these two sorts of Favours from our Lord; and I know, that whosoever may have arrived to be in Rapt, will understand me well; but such as have had no experience therein, will hold all that to be impertinent, which I have said; and perhaps it is so indeed. For, for such a thing as I, to presume to speak of such a thing as this; and to give some part of that to be understood, which it seemes impossible even to begin to declare, with any words, it is not strange a whitt, if I talk idly. But yet I believe this of our Lord (because his Divine Majesty knowes, that, next to this act of Obedience, my intention is no other than to make Soules, as it were, gluttonous, after the obtaining of so high a good) that he will be pleased to assist me herein; and I am sure, I will say nothing whereof I have not had much experience. And so it is, that when I began to write of this Water, I conceived it to be a more impossible thing for me to treat of it, than to speak *Greek*; so very hard, did I finde it. Upon this, I gave it over, and went to receive the *Blessed Sacrament*. But our Lord be ever praised, who doth so great Favours to ignorant persons. O Virtue of Obedience, which art able to do all things! For, God did illuminate my understanding, sometimes, by helping me to the very expresse words, which I was to use; and, at other times, by representing the manner to me, how I should declare the thing; So that, as his Divine Majesty was pleased to do in the former Degree of Prayer, it seemes, that he will also here declare, what I neither can, nor know, how to expresse. But that which now I say, is a most entire truth; and so, that which shall be good, is his instruction, and doctrine; and whatsoever falls-out to be ill, it is clear, that it proceeds, and flowes from this Sea of evils, which is my self. And therefore I here affirme, that, if any have arrived to these particulars of Prayer, wherein our Lord hath don so great Favour to this miserable, and wretched one, (as it

it is likely, that there are many) if they shall be pleased, to treat of these things with me, as conceiving them some way mistaken, our Lord will so assist this poor Servant of his, as that she shall be able to go forward, to uphold his truth.

But now, to speak of this last Water, which comes from Heaven, to satisfy, and even replenish the whole Garden by the abundance thereof; if our Lord did never forbear to give it, whensoever there were need, it is evident enough already, of what easie it would be to the Gardiner, and that there would never be any Winter, but always most temperate weather; nor would there ever be any want, either of Fruits, or Flowers; and so it may be easily seen, in what delight he would remain. But, as long as we live in this world, this is impossible; and we must alwayes take care, whensoever we shall want one of the Waters, to procure another. This last which falls from Heaven, comes down sometimes, even when the Gardiner thinks of it least. True it is, that in the beginnings, this is almost ever wont to happen after long Mental Prayer; For our Lord comes by degrees to catch this poor little Bird, and to lodge it safely in the Nest; that it may there rest and repose. And after it hath put it self long upon Flights, procuring by the exercize of the Understanding and Will, and in fine, by all the Powers it had to go in search of God; and to please him; he vouchsafes to allow it a reward, even in this life; yea, and this so very great a reward, that any one little moment thereof may well suffice as a full retribution for all that care and trouble, which it could ever have endured in this world.

The Soul being thus in search of God, doth find her self, as it were, even to sink under a sweet and most excessive delight; as being all in a certain way of near fainting; so that the breath is beginning to fail, and so also all corporal strength; in such sort, as that she is now not able so much as to move her hands, but with much pain. The eyes are also closed, though without any purpose to shut them; and, when by accident they chance to open, she sees almost nothing distinctly; nor, if she read, can she so much as judge rightly of any letter; nor can she even guess how to name it right. She sees, that indeed, there are letters; but, the Understanding not giving her any assistance, she knows not how to read, though she would. She hears, but yet understands not what she hears; so that she receives no other benefit at all by her Senses, but only, that they will not permit her to take the full fruition of her delight; and so, upon the matter, they do her more hurt than good. As for speaking, it is in vain to think of any such thing; for she cannot so much as frame any one word; nor, if she were able to judge it, were she yet able to

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pronounce it ; in regard that all the strength of her Body is absolutely lost, for the greater increase of that of her Soul, that so she may the better enjoy her glory. The exterior delight also which she feels, is both great; and well perceived.

This Prayer puts the person to no manner of inconvenience in any kind, how long soever it may last ; at least it never put me to any ; nor am I able to remember, (when our Lord did me this Favour) how sick or weak soever I were, that I ever found my self the worse ; but rather, with much improvement in my health. But indeed, what hurt can ever be done by so great a Good ? the exterior operations are so well known, that there can no doubt be made, but that there is a great occasion that our Lord takes all their strength from them with so great delight ; yet so, that the same grows afterward to be greater.

It is true, that in the beginning this state is wont to pass away in very short time ; at least, it hapned so to me. But as for these exterior signes, as also in this failing of operation in the Senses, it is not so easily to be understood, when things pass away in short time ; but yet it is discerned with ease by the excess of the Favours that the clearness and heat of the Sun which hath been there, must needs have been very great, which hath so melted, and dissolved her.

Let this also be well noted, that, in my opinion, how long soever that space of time might be, wherein all the Powers of the Soul were in suspense, it must needs have been very short; and if it should arrive to half an hour, it were very much. For my part, I think I was never so long. True it is, that one can hardly judge how long they are, since the Parties are deprived of outward sense : but I say, that it must needs be a very short time, wherein no one of the Powers can be able to return again to it self.

The Will is, indeed, the only Power which maintains the Work ; for, as for the other two, they quickly become importunate upon her. Yet the Will, remaining quiet, and fixed, suspends them again ; and so they stay another little while ; and afterward return to live as before.

In this manner some whole hours of Prayer may be passed ; yea and sometimes are passed so. For, when the two Powers of the Soul have tasted of that Celestial wine, and begin to be inebriated with it, they easily are induced to lose themselves again, so to gain the more ; and so they go to accompany the Will ; and all three come to be in the act of enjoying. But this point of being totally lost, and without any Imagination at all (which Power in my understanding, is also wholly lost) I say, lasts but a very little time ; though yet they come not always so wholly

wholly to themselves upon a sudden, but that they may remain even some hours disengaged, God vouchsafing by little and little, to recollect them again to himself.

And now let us come to the interior of that which the Soul is wont too feel at these times; and let them declare it who know how; since it cannot be well understood, much less expressed. I was thinking, when about to write this (as soon as I had received the *B. Sacrament*, and after the end of this very kind of Prayer which now I write) what the Soul did at that time. And our Lord said to me these words : *It doth, my Daughter, wholly dissolve and defeat it self, to be, so, the more engulfed in me ; for, now it is no longer she, who lives, but I ; And since she cannot comprehend that which she understands, it is, in understanding it, not to understand it.* He who shall have had trial of this by experience, will understand something of this ; for, I cannot deliver that more clearly, which passes here, since it is so very obscure. I can only say, that in this case, their being, then, so close to God, is represented to them ; and there remains such a kind of certainty thereof, that it cannot possibly fail to be believed.

And now here all the Powers of the Soul fail, and are suspended in such sort, that by no means (as I have said) it can be understood, that they work. If she were thinking of some Mystery, it is instantly so forgotten, as if there had never been any such thought. If she were reading, there is no remembrance of it ; nor yet of meditating ; and if praying vocally, in like manner. So that now, this importunate little Gnat of the Memory hath her wings burnt here, and can now no longer spring up nor stir. The Will also is now employed, all, in loving ; though it understand not how it loves. The Understanding, if it understand, it is not yet understood how it understands ; and at least it can comprehend nothing of that which it understands. To me it doth not seem that it understands ; because (as I was saying) it is not understood ; and, for my part, I attain not to understand it.

At the first I was in so great an ignorance, as not to know that God was in all things ; and considering how very present I conceived him to be to me, it seemed impossible for me to believe the contrary. To leave therefore to believe that he was there, I could not ; because it seemed to me as it were apparent and clear, that I had understood his very Presence to be there. Some men, who were not learned, told me, that he was only there by his Grace ; which still I could not believe ; because as I was saying, I held him to be present otherwise ; and thus I continued with some trouble. But at length, a great learned man of the Order of

the Glorious S. Dominic freed me from this doubt ; and told me , that indeed he was present , and how that he communicated himself to us ; which comforted me very much.

Now it is here to be noted and understood,that this Celestial Water is alwayes a most eminent Favour of our Lord , and gives the Soul exceeding great advantages ; as I shall now declare.

CHAP. XIX.

She prosecutes the same Discourse ; and begins to declare the effects which this Degree of Prayer works in the Soul. She persuades men earnestly not to turn back , nor to give over their Prayer, though they should happen to fall , even after they had received these Favours. She speaks of the harm, that followes if they do otherwise.

After this Prayer, and Union, the Soul remain with an excessive kind of tendernels ; in such sort, that she would fain even destroy and dissolve her self ; not through pain or trouble , but by abundance of tears of joy wherein she is bathed without so much as feeling , or knowing when or how she wept them. It gives her a great delight to find the impetuous force of that fire appeased and allayed by Water ; which yet makes it increase so much the more. This language of mine may seem to be a kind of gibberish ; but yet thus stands the case.

It hath hapned to me sometimes in this degree of Prayer,to be so wholly out of my self, as that I knew not whether it were a dream ; or whether in very deed I had that glory which I felt ; and in seeing my self all bathed in Water,(which without any pain,distilled with such force,& speed from mine eyes,that it appeared,that a Celestial Cloud rained it down;)I found that it was no dream. This hapned to be in the beginnings of this Prayer ; and it passed quickly over. The Soul remains so couragious thereby, that if in this point of time it were cut into a thousand pieces for God's sake , it would be a great consolation to her. Here come in her promises ; her heroical resolutions ; the lively efficacy of her desires ; her beginning to abhor the world ; her clearly discerning her own vanity ; and all this,much more perfectly, and more highly, than it hapned in any of her former Prayers. Her humility is also grown much stronger ; for now she very clearly discernes that no diligence at all of her own was any piece of a cause for bringing her that excessive and incomparable

parable Favour ; nor for retaining it. She sees now clearly that she is most unworthy (for in a room, where much Sun enters, there is not the thinnest Cobweb which can lye hid.) She now looks very clearly upon her own misery ; and is so free from Vain-Glory, that it seems a kind of impossibility for her to have any ; because now already she hath it in her eye, how little she is able to perform ; or rather nothing at all ; and that in this case there was hardly so much as any consent of hers ; but it seemis that whether she would or no , they shut up the gates of all her Senses, that she might so the better enjoy her Lord ; that she remains all alone with him, and what hath she to do but to love him ? She neither sees, nor hears, unles made to do so, as it were, by very strong hand ; and therefore there is little for which to thank her. Her former life grows then to be represented to her with perfect truth ; together with the great mercy of Almighty God. And all this occurs to her without any necessity at all, that her Understanding should now go on hunting after it. For there doth she already find the Food ready dressed , which she is to eat and understand. Of her self she sees very well that she deserves Hell-Fire ; and that now instead thereof, they give her no other punishment than Glory. And therefore she doth now even consume her self in the praises of God ; and now would I be glad even to consume my self so. Blessed be thou , O my Lord , who hast in such sort vouchsafed to make so filthy a Fish-Pond , as I was, become so pure and clear a water, as that it may serve for thine owa Table. Be thou adored and praised , O thou Régalo of Angels , who hast vouchsafed thus to exalt so base a worm.

This profit of the Soul remains for some time therein ; and now she can already (understanding clearly enough that the Fruit is none of her own) begin to give part of it to others , without feeling any want of it her self. She now begins also to give signes and marks of such a Soul as is a Store-House of the Treasures of Heaven ; and to carry great desires of making others partake them ; and to beseech God that she may not be alone in possessing them. She begins now to profit her Neighbours without almost understanding it her self, and without her seeming to do any thing therein ; but they, who receive the benefit, understand it well. For already do thole Flowers yield so high and apparent a Scent, that it invites all to come near them. They know that she hath great Vertues ; and they see that the Fruit is very tempting ; and they would fain help her to eat it.

And now, if the earth of this Garden be manured, and digged-up very deep , with Persecutions , with Detractions , and with Sicknes

ness(as there are few, who arrive thus far, without these things)& if also it be well mollified & loosed from all proper Interest, the Water sinks so very deep into this Soyl, that it will scarce be ever dry again. But if it be such a kind of earth, as that (being meer earth,) it hath such a quantity of thorns, as I remained with in the beginning; and, if it want a rooting out of the occasions of ill, and is not withall so grateful, as so high a Favour requires, that Soyl growes again, to be dry. And, in that case if the Gardiner prove negligent, and slack, and if our Lord through his own only goodness do not again resolve to bestow rain upon it, you may well give this Garden for lost. For just thus did it happen to me, severall times; and I am amazed to reflect upon it; yea, and it were not possible for me to believe it, if the case had not been mine own.

I write thus much for the comfort of such Souls as are weak, like mine; that they may never dispair, nor cease to have confidence, in the greatness of God; yea, though they should fall even after our Lord had brought them to so incomparable Favours as are mentioned here, they must not yet dispair, unles they will be totally lost; for there is nothing which will not be gotten with tears; and one Water drawes another.

One of the things by which I have been animated (being that miserable Creature, which I am) to obedience in writing this Discourse, and in giving this account of my wicked Life, and of the Favours which our Lord hath been pleased to do me, (and that, not whilst I was serving him, but offending him) hath been this. And I wish that I had here some great authority, that so I might be the better believed in this particular; and I humbly beseech our Lord, his Majesty would bestow this Favour on me. I say then, that none of those, who have begun to use Mental Prayer, is to be dismayed, in saying, *If I should return to be wicked again, it would be worse for me to go forward with the use of Prayer.* I believe, it will be worse, if he give-over his Prayer, and forbear to reform his life. But if he shall not give-over his Prayer, let him be confident, that it will bring him again to the Port of light. The Devil made a fierce battery against me in this matter, and I passed so long without Prayer, (as conceiving, that, being so wicked as I was, it would be an act of more humility to desist from it) that I gave it over for about a year and a half, or for a year at least; for, of the half year I am not so certain: But this was likely to be, and was indeed, no other thing, than for me to cast my self even into Hell, without needing any Devils for that purpose.

Good God! how great is that blindness, and how doth the Devil hit

hit right for his purpose, in pressing us herein? The Traytor knows very well, that he hath lost that Soul, which continues with perseverance in Prayer; and that all those Falls, which he procures to give us, will but assist us, through the goodness of God, to make afterwards the greater leap so to advance in his service. The Devil, I say, knows, very well, how much this imports him. O my Jesus, what a thing it is, to see a Soul, that is in this State, fallen-back to Sin, when thou by thy mercy dost lend him, that hand of thine, to rise again? O, how doth such an one know the multitude of thy greatnesses, and mercies; together with his own misery? Here comes she to annihilate her self in good earnest, and to understand thy Majestical ways: Here she not once pretences to lift her eyes up to Heaven, though yet she raise her thoughts to consider how much she owes thee: She here growes all devoted to the *Queen of Heaven*, that she may help to appease thee: Here she invokes those *Saints*, who fell, after thou hadst once called them to thy Service; to the end she may be assisted by them: Here she conceives, that whatsoever thou bestowest on her is too much; because she sees, that she deserves not the very ground, upon which she goes. Here comes in the frequenting of the *Sacraments*, and a Lively Faith, which now remains in her heart, as seeing the great power, and vertue, which God hath infused into them; and the praising, thee, for having left such Medicines and Salves for the Cure of our Sores; which not only skin them, but take them utterly away. In a word, she is amazed at these things; and who, O thou Lord of my Soul, ought not to be amazed at so great mercy, and such excessive Favour, upon our Treasons, so abominable, and so fowl, that, for my part, I cannot understand, how my heart comes not even to split, when I write this; because I find my self so very wicked? and yet it seems, as if I had a mind to make thee a kind of recompence, for so many fowl Treasons, as I have committed against thee, by these few, poor, little tears of mine; which yet are given me by thy self; and which really, for my part thereof, are but as so much water of a stinking Well. For, still I am committing Sins, and procuring to frustrate, and annihilate the Favours, which thou hast done me. But be thou pleased, O my Lord, to give value to these poor tears, and do thou purify this so troubled Water of my Soul, though it should be for no other reason, than only to keep men free from the temptation of making rash judgments; (such as for my part, I have been subject to) in thinking, Why, O Lord, dost thou pass over those other holy people who have always served, and suffered for thee; bred-up in the way of a Religious Life; and indeed truly Religious;

ligious ; and not like me, who had no more thereof, than the name ; And yet, I clearly see, that thou didst them not those Favours which thou hast done me. But yet here, I discern very well, O thou my Good, that thou keepest their reward in store, that so thou maist give it them all together ; and that my weaknes is so great, that I had need to be proceeded with, thus, whereas they, like gallant persons, are content to serve thee still, without these helps ; and thou treatest them as valiant persons , and, without all self-Interest.

For all this, thou knowest , O my Lord , that I cryed out many times before thee, excusing them who murmured against me; because I thought they had too much reason for what they said. This occurred to me , O Lord, when already through thy goodness thou with-heldst me from offending thee so highly any more ; and when I went diverting my self from all that which I thought might displease thee: And that when once I began to do this , thou also didst begin to open thy Treasures towards this Servant of thine ; and it seems, thou didst expect nothing else , but only that there might be an inclination in me to receive them ; and so quickly didst thou begin, not only to bestow them, but to be pleased that others shoud understand that thou hadst bestowed them. And when this was once perceived, some began to hold a good opinion of me ; for all had not yet known so well how ill I was ; although much of it partly appeared. Then did murmurings and Persecution begin great store , and in my opinion not without much cause. And therefore I had no enmity against any ; but besought thy Divine Majesty to consider what great reason they had. They said, that I had a mind to make my self a Saint ; and that I invented Novelties, though I had not arrived yet to fulfil all mine own Rule ; nor overtaken in vertue those many good and holy Religious Women who were in that Monastery. Nor do I think indeed that I shall ever arrive so far (unless God , through his goodness will be pleased to perform it all on his part) but rather I was likely to abolish that which was good, and to establish customs which were not so ; at least I did what I could to introduce them ; and I had always power enoug to do hurt. So that they blamed me without any fault of theirs; nor do I say,that they were only Religious Women, but others also, who told me truth, because it was so permitted by thee.

When once I was saying my Office, I, (who was sometimes subject to this temptation,) came to this Verse : *Justus es, Domine, & rectum iudicium tuum ; Thou art just O Lord , and thy judgment is right ;* and I began to consider , how great a truth this was (for in this kind the Devil had never power to tempt me so far , as to make me doubt ,

doubt, but that thou, O Lord, art the Owner and Possessor of all good things; no nor in any thing at all which belongs to *Faith*. Nay rather it seemed to me, that the more they were above Nature, the more firmly did I believe them; yea, and they caused even more devotion in me: And, in regard that thou art Omnipotent, all such greatnesses as thou shouldest be pleased to act, and execute, were resolved upon, and concluded by me; and of this, as I was saying, I never had doubt.) Afterward considering upon this, how thou couldst permit, that there should be so many dear Servants of thine, as I was saying, who yet received not those Favours, and Regalos, which thou wert pleased to vouchsafe me, (I being so miserable, as I was) thou answeredst me thus, O Lord: *Do thou serve me; and trouble not thy self with that.* Now, this was the very first Word of that kind, which I understood thee to speak to me; and therefore, it amazed me much; For I will hereafter declare this manner of understanding with other things, I speak not of here; for it were to go from the purpose; and I believe, I have gone from it already; and, in effect, I scarce know what I have said; nor can it well be otherwise; but your Reverence must needs bear with these intervals, and interruptions. For, when I consider, how much God hath endured at my hands, and withal behold my self in this condition, it is no strange thing, that I lose my aime both in that which I say, and am to say. Our Lord grant, that all my impertinencies, and rovings may always be of this kind; and that his Divine Majesty may not permit, that I ever vary a tittle from him, but he rather consume me even this moment. For it may well be sufficient for me, to have discerned his great mercy, not once, but often, in that he hath been pleased to pardon so great an ingratitude as mine. He pardoned S. Peter once; but me often; so that the Devil had some kind of reason to tempt me, as hoping that I would not pretend, to hold a straight friendship with one, with whom I had been in so publicke enmity. But how great, O Lord, was this blindness of mine? For, where could I ever think O my Lord, to find any remedy, but by thee? What a sensles kind of folly was it for me to fly from the light, that so I might for ever go stumbling on in the dark? What a foolish kind of proud Humility was that which the Devil invented for me, when he perswaded me to depart from resting on that Pillar and Staff, which might support me that so my Fall might not be so great? At this instant do I blefe my self with the Cross; for, me thinks, I never passed a danger so very hazardous in my whole life, as this invention was, which the Devil had a mind to teach me by way of Humility. For, he put it into my conceit, to think how it could be possible, that so wick-

ed a thing as my self, and having received so great Favours from God, could ever aspire to Mental Prayer ; and that, for me it would suffice, if I said those Vocal Prayers, to which I was bound, as others did ; but that, since now I did not thus much well, what sense was there, that I should pretend to do more ? and that this was to shew little Reverence to God, and to undervalue his Favours. It was fit to think, and know all this ; but to put it in execution had been extreamly ill done. And be thou Blessed, O Lord, who broughtest me the remedy. For, this temptation seems to have been a beginning to that other, which the Devil brought upon *Judas* ; but that Traitor durst not tempt me so openly, but would fain have come by little and little to set upon me ; as he did upon him.

And now, for the love of our Lord, let all them, who use Mental Prayer, consider that which follows very well. Let them know, that, during the time, when I forbore it, my life was much worse, than before. And let it be well considered, what a fine remedy the Devil brought me, and what a ridiculous Humility it must be, which filled me with so deep a disquiet. For indeed, how could this Soul of mine appease it self ? She poor wretch went away from her true repose, and rest ; She had her Favours, and Regalo's present to her memory ; and she found, the contentments of this world most loathsome. I am amazed, how I could endure it ; though belike it was with some kind of hope ; for, I never, as I remember (though yet, it be now, more than one and twenty years agoe) gave over a being resolved to return to Prayer. But I hoped first in time to be more free from sin. But, O, how ill addressed was this hope of mine ? Thus the Devil would have deferred me till the Day of Judgment ; that so from thence he might have carried me to Hell.

Since I, when frequenting Prayer, and Reading, which was indeed the way to see real Truths, and the wicked course which I took, and often importuning our Blessed Lord with many tears, yet was so very bad, that this could not help me, by my growing afterward to give over the good things, and employing my self upon idle pastimes, and exposing my self to many occasions of ill, and enjoying very few helps ; (and I may rather say, none at all, but only such, as might help me to fall) what could I ever hope, but what I have said ? I believe, that a certain Religious man of S. Dominic's Order, who was very learned, hath great merit in the sight of God ; for he awaked me out of this sleep. And he made me (as I think, I have already expressed) receive the B. Sacrament every Fortnight, and not to be so faulty as formerly. I began to come back again into my self ; though yet withal, I forbear not to commit some

some offences against our Lord. But because I had not lost my way, I went still on with falling, and rising ; though yet but by little and little. And he, who never gives over to goe forward, will arrive at length by going softly, though it be late. For my part, I conceive that for a Soul to lose her way, and to leave her Prayer, is indeed but one and the self same thing ; our Lord deliver us from it, for his Mercies sake.

It may hereupon, be inferred (& I desire, for the love of our Lord, that it may be much observed) that, although a Soul shall come to such passe, as that our Lord may do her great Favours in Prayer, she must not yet be confident of her self, since she may yet come to fall again. And let her not, by any means, expose her self to occasions of Sin. Let her be careful to consider thus much ; for, the deceipt, of which the Devil is wont to serve himself here, is, that though the Favour imparted to the Soul, be most certainly from God, yet the Traytour makes use of that very Favour, in what he can ; and especially for the disadvantage of persons who are not strong in vertue, and mortification ; nor are absolutly untyed, and loose from all things belonging to this world. For, here men, are not by meanes of this Prayer sufficiently strengthened, and fortifid (as I will declare afterward) for the putting themselves into occasions, and dangers ; how great desires, and resolutions soever they may have.

This is an excellent Doctrine; and not mine, but taught by God himself ; and so I shall be glad, that all ignorant persons, like me, may learn it. For, though a Soul be in this State, yet must she not trust her self so far, as to fally out to fight ; but she will have acquitted her self well, if she can defend her self. So that, in this State and condition, it will be necessary for her to carry Defensive Armes, against the Devils ; for yet she hath not strength enough to assault them, and to tread them under foot ; as yet, they will be able to do, who shall find themselves in that State whereof I will discourse afterward. But this is that devise, whereby the Devil is wont to take us ; That, when once he sees a Soul arrive to be so very near to our Lord, and which judgeth well of the difference between the blessings which belong to this life, and the next ; and of the Love which our Lord bears to it ; from this very Love he makes such a kind of confidence, and security grow, as that she shall never fall from that, which she enjoys. She also seemes to eye her reward so very clearly, that it is impossible for her to quit that, which is so very delightful, and gustful even in this life, for so base, and filthy a thing, as worldly pleasure is. Now, by meanes of this vaine confidence, doth

the Devil grow to deprive her of the distrust which otherwise she would have, of her own strength ; and thus, she exposes her self, as I was saying, to danger ; and begins, with a good zeal, to be giving the Fruits of her Garden away to others, without any limits ; as believing now, that she hath no more cause to be afraid concerning her self ; and this is not out of pride (for, the Soul understands well enough, that she is able to do nothing, of her self) but through much confidence in God, without discretion ; because she doth not well consider, that she is not yet well feathered. She may well step out of her Nest ; yea, and God himself will perhaps take her, now and then, out from thence ; But she is not yet fit for a Flight, because her vertues are not yet grown to be of full strength ; nor hath she yet experience for the knowledge of dangers ; nor doth she yet understand the mischeif, which growes by putting too much trust in her own forces.

This is that which destroyed me ; and both for this, and for all things there will be great necessity of a Director ; and of conversation with persons who are spiritual, I am fully perswaded, that, when God doth once bring a Soul to this state, he will not leave to favour her, nor suffer her to perish ; if she do not very shamefully, and entirely, forsake the serving his Divine Majesty. But yet, if (as I said) she fall, let her consider, and consider again, (even for the love of our Blessed Lord) and take heed, that the Devil deceive her not so far, as to make her give over her Prayer, as he did me, under the preteace of false Humility ; as I have declared ; and as I would fain repeat very often. But let her trust in the goodness of God, that it is greater than all the sins, which we can commit ; and, that he will not remember our ingratitude, when once we, reflecting duly upon our selves, desire to return again to his friendship ; nor even the Favours, which he hath done us, so as to punish us for them ; but that rather they help to obtain pardon for us so much the sooner, as for persons, who have belonged to his House, and have had the hononr to eat (as men use to say) of his bread. Let them remember his words ; and consider, how he hath proceeded with me, who sooner wcaried my self with offending his Divine Majesty, than he forbare, or failed to pardon me. For, he never growes unwilling to give ; nor is it possible, to draw his Mercies dry ; and so, let not us be weary of receiving them at his hands. Let him be blessed for ever, *Amen* ; and let all creatures praise him.

CHAP. XX.

Wherein She treats of the difference between Union, and Rapt; and declares, what kind of thing a Rapt is. She speaks also, of the blessing, which that Soul hath, which our Lord, through his Goodness, brings thither; and of the Effects, which Raps use to produce.

I Would be glad to know, how to declare (through the Favour of God) the difference, which is between *Union*, on the one side; and *Rapt*, and *Flight*, (as they are wont to call it) of *Spirit*, on the other; for, these two latter do signify, in substance, but one thing; and it is also called *Exstase*. The advantage is very great, which belongs to *Rapt*, beyond *Union*; and the effects also, which it produces, are much greater; and it hath also many other operations. For, meer *Union* seemes to be alwayes after the same manner, both in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end; and it is alwayes in the interiour part. But now, as Raps are Visitations of the Soul in a higher Strain, they are wont to produce their Effects, not only interiourly, but exteriously also. Our Lord, as he hath declared the rest, so also vouchsafe to declared this; for certainly, if his Divine Majesty had not been pleased to give me to understand, by what means, and in what manner, somwhat might be spoken, I should not possibly have known, which way to have done it.

Let us therefore now consider, that this last *Water* whereof we have spoken, is so very plentiful and abundant, that, if it be not because the Soyl of the Garden doth not consent to receive it, we may believe, that the very Cloud it self of that great Majesty, is here with us, which raineth it self down upon this earth. And so, when we are grateful to our Lord for this great blessing, acknowledging the same by our works, according to the uttermost of our power, our Lord catches-up the Soul (as a man may say) even just so, as the clouds catch up the vapours from the earth; and so taking her up, the Cloud rises up to Heaven, and carries the same along, with it self; and shews her certain things belonging to that Kingdom, which is prepared for her. I know not whether this Comparison will be thought to suit well with that, whereof I am speaking; but I am sure, that in realty of truth it passes thus. In these Raps it doth not seem that the Soul doth even animate the Body; and so the Body it self remains with a kind of trouble, and defect, through the want of the natural heat, and goes on cooling it self, though yet

with an excessive sweetnes, and delight. There is here no means at all to resist ; though in Union (we being then on our own earth) there is some remedy ; and so (though it be not without suffering a kind of pain, and using some force) there may always, in effect, be some resistance made. But here for the most part there is no remedy at all ; nor any help ; but, many times without our thinking of it, or being any way able to prevent it, there growes to be such a speedy, and strong kind of impetuosit, that you see, and find this Cloud to raise it self instantly up ; or rather, that this strong Eagle takes you, and carries you quite away, between her wings. I say, that you understand and find your self to be carried away, and know not whither. For, howsoever the thing happen to be with delight, yet so great is the weaknes of our natural condition, that it puts us into some fear in the beginning. And therefore, it will be necessary, in this case, for the Soul to be much more courageous, and resolute, than for all those occasions, which were precedent. For here she must be content to hazard all, come on it what will, and to leave her self wholly in the hands of God, and to goe whithersoever she shall be carried with a good will ; for in fine, they will be sure to carry her, whether she will or no ; and that, with so great extremity of strength and speed, that, howsoever I had a mind, very often, to resist it, and employed all the strength I had to that purpose, (and especially at some particular times, when these things fell out in publicke ; yea and at many other times also, when they were private ; for I was then in fear, lest I might be deceived) it was yet but seldom, that I was able to prevail. Somtimes I was able to do somthing, but with a great deal of harrassing, and toile, just as if some ordinary person had been fighting with some strong Gyant ; and afterward I should find my self very weary. But at other times, it was altogether impossible for me to hinder it ; for, my Soul would be carried absolutely away, and ordinarily even my head, as it were, after it ; so, that I could not stay it ; yea and somtimes my whole Body so, as to be raised-up from the ground. This last hath happened rarely to me ; but once it was upon the very point to arrive, whilst we were assembled together in the Quire ; and I being then upon my knees, (as at the point of going to receive the *Blessed Sacrament*) it put me to extream trouble ; because it seemed to me a very extraordinary thing, and which presently would be much noted ; and so I commanded my Religious-women (for at that time, I was Priores) that they should not speak of it. But at other times when I began to discern that our Lord was going about to do the same, (and once in particular, when divers principal Ladies were present ; and

and it was upon the Feast of our Vocation, when there was a Sermon) I did even spread my self all along upon the ground ; and, though the Religious women came then about me to keep my Body down, yet the thing was easily perceived. Upon this, I humbly prayed our Lord in most particular manner, that by no means he would do me any such Favours, as might carry any of these exterior demonstrations with them ; for, already I was very weary of being so wary and watchful over my self ; for that such kind of Favours could not possibly be done me by his Divine Majesty, but so, that every body would come to know it. And it seems, through his goodness, he hath been pleased to hear my Prayer ; for since that time, I never had any Raps of that kind ; but it is true, that it is not long since.

Now, so it is, that, when I had a mind to resist these Raps, there seemed to be somewhat of so mighty force under my feet, which raised me up, that I know not to what to compare it, which came with much more impetuosity than any of those other things of Spirit ; and so I was even torn, as it were, to pieces ; for, the combate is great ; but in fine, all helped little, for, when our Lord hath a mind to do any thing, no power is able to stand against it. At other times, he is pleased to content himself, with letting us see, that he is disposed to do us that Favour, and that there is no aversion in his Divine Majesty ; and that, we opposing our selves for Humility's sake, there follow yet the self-same Effects, as if we had wholly consented.

Now, these effects are great. For first, the mighty power of our Lord is made apparent thereby ; and that, when his Divine Majesty is pleased to dispose of things otherwise, we are no more able to detain our Bodies, than our Souls ; nor are we Lords thereof ; but must, though against our will, acknowledg, that there is a Superior ; and that these Favours come from him ; and that, of our selves, we can do nothing in nothing ; and so, a great impression of Humility is made upon the Soul by this means. And further I confess, that it bred also a great fear in me, (and, at the first, an extream great one) to see, that a massie Body should be taken up from the earth. For, though the Spirit be that, which drawes it after it ; and though it be with great suavity, and delight, (if it be not resisted) yet our Senses are not lost thereby ; at least I, for my part, was so perfectly in my Senses, that I was able to understand that I was raised. There doth also hereby appear so great a Majesty in him who can do this, that it makes even the very hair of the head stand on end ; and there remains a mighty fear to offend so great a God ; but yet so, as that it is wrapped up in an excessive kind of love,

which

which she conceives anew towards him, whom we find to carry so great a love to such rotten wormes, as we are. For now he seems not content with drawing the Soul to himself, after so particular and so certain a manner, but that he will needs also draw the very Body too, even whilft it is so mortal, and compounded of so filthy earth, as we have made it by our Sins. This also leaves, in the Soul, a very strange kind of loosening, and disengagement from all the things of this World; which I know not well to express, how it is; but me thinks, I may well say that it is not only, in some sort different, but also greater than those others, which are only of the Spirit. For though, in those other, there be a total untying, and loosning it self from all things, for as much as concernes the Spirit; yet here, it seems, our Lord is pleased, that even the Body also it self shall practise it too. And it breeds such a new kind of shyness and mislike, in order to the things of this world, that it makes even our very life, much more painful to us. It gives also such another pain, as we can neither tell how to procure; nor free our selves from the same, when we have it. And I would be extream glad, to be able to make this great pain be understood; but, I believe, I shall not know how to do it; though yet I will say somewhat, if I be able.

And, it is to be noted, that these things come upon me, now at the last, after all those *Visions* and *Revelations*, whereof I will write; and after the time, when I used to practise that Prayer, wherein our Lord was wont to allow me so great Regalo's, and gusts. And though yet these things do not cease with me at some times, yet doth this Paine, more often, and more usually seize upon me, which I will now declare. It is sometimes greater, and sometimes les; and now I will speak of it, as when it is greater. For, though I will treat hereafter of those strong impetuositie's, which used to come upon me, when our Lord was pleased to give me Raps; yet they have, in my opinion, no more to do, by way of Comparison with this, than things Corporal, with the most Spiritual. And I believe, that I do not exaggerate the matter a whit; because that Pain seems to be such, as, although the Soul do feel it, yet it feels it together with the Body; and so, both of them participate therein; And it is not with that extremity, of being abandoned, and utterly forsaken; which is in this; in acquiring which, as I was saying, we have no part at all our selves; But there often comes a desire unexpectedly upon us; and I know not from whence it arises. And, upon this desire, which penetrates the whole Soul, even at one very instant she begins to afflict, and belabour her self so, as that she rises much above her self; and indeed above whatsoever is created; and God is pleased to make her so
very

very desolate and disgusted, in order to all temporal things, that , how much soever she may endeavour to the contrary, there is nothing in this world, which will either accompany her, or whereby she would be glad to be accompanied, but even directly to dye in that Solitude. For , if any body speak to her, or if she would employ all her power , to speak to others, it serves to very little purpose ; for, her Spirit (do what she can) doth still, not cease from making her find her self to be perfectly alone. And, though it seem to me, as if God were then extreamly remote from her ; yet, at times he communicates his greatnesses to her by a manner, more strange than can possibly be expressed : Nor do I believe, that any other will either believe it , or can understand it ; but only some such persons, as may have felt it. For , this is no communication to give comfort ; but only to shew the reason , which that person hath to be afflicted, and distressed , for being absent from that Good , which comprehends all goods in it self. By means of this communication both the desire doth increase, and so also doth the extremity of that Solitude , wherein the Soul finds her self ; together with a certain pain , which is so very delicate, and penetrative (the Soul being placed then in that kind of Desert) that it may even literally seem to be at that time that very thing, whereof the *Royal Prophet* spoke , when he was in the same Solitude. Save, that our Lord would vouchsafe the sense of those things to him, and make him feel it, being a Saint, after a more transcendent manner. But the words, whereof I speak, are these : *Vigilavi , & factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto.* *I have watched, and am become like a solitary Sparrow, upon the House top.* And so doth that Verse represent it self to me at those times, that, me-thinks, I do even see mine own condition therein. And it comforts me to observe , that others have also found themselves in so high an extremity of Solitude ; and especially , when they were such persons, as the *Royal Prophet* was. So that, me-thinks, this kind of Soul is not then it self, but rather upon the very top, or ridge, as one may say, of its self ; yea, and of all things also, which are created ; for then, me-thinks, the Soul remains in the very highest, and most superiour part of her self.

At other times, the Soul seems to find her self , as in the extremity of need, and misery ; and that then she is saying , and asking her self this question : *Ubi est Deus tuus? Where is now thy God?* And here it is to be noted, that I knew not well then, what those Verses signified in the vulgar Tongue ; yet , when afterwards I came to know it , I was much comforted to see , that our Lord was pleased to bring them to my memory without any procurement at all of mine. At other times , I also

called that Saying of S. Paul to mind : That he was crucified to the World. I say not, that I was so ; for I see but too well, that I am not ; but me thinks the Soul, in this case, is very much after that manner ; for , she gets no comfort, either from Heaven, because she is not there ; nor carries she any affection at all to the Earth ; nor is she also there ; but remains, as if she were crucified, between Heaven, and Earth ; and suffering all the while without receiving any succour from either of these places. For, that which comes to her from Heaven, (which is, as I have said before, a knowledg of God, so admirable, and far above all that, which we can desire) doth but serve for her greater torment, because it multiplieth the same desire , in such sort , that the excessive pain thereof puts her, in my opinion, even past her senses ; save that she remains so but a very little while. Now this condition of mind seems to be no less, than the very agony and pangs of death it self ; yet withal , there is so very great a contentment taken in this suffering , that I know not, to what to compare it. It is a sharpe , yet savoury and delightful Martyrdome ; since all that concerns this world , which it is possible to represent to the Soul (yea though it were the most delightful Object , she had ever been accustomed to) is by no means admitted, but instantly cast away from her. She understands also here very well, that she cares for nothing at all , but her God ; and yet she considers no particular thing in him ; but will have him, all together ; and she knows not what she would have. I say again , that she knows not ; because her Imagination represents nothing at all to her ; yea and, in my opinion, during a great part of that time, wherein she is after that manner, the Powers of her Soul do not work ; but, as in the case of Union , and of Raps, by her joy ; so here they are wholly suspended, by her pain.

O, that I were able to give your Reverence to understand this well ! were it but that you might so make me know more particularly , what it is. For now this is that, in which my Soul doth ordinarily most continue ; and , whensoever I am not employed about somewhat , she is put upon these straits , and pangs of death. She is afraid when she sees them begin, for fear lest it should cost me my life ; but yet , when it is once begun, she would be glad, that, during all her life , she might continue in that state of sufferance ; though it be so very excessive , that the person is scarce able to endure it. For, sometimes I am almost without any pulse at all, as my Sisters tell me, who then come towards me , to see what passes ; for now they begin a little more to understand it. And the bones of my armes, are so stretched, and my hands are so stiffe , that I cannot sometimes bring them together ; and such a pain remains till the

the next day after in my wrists, and in my Body, that it seems, as if I had been racked and disjoyned. And I sometimes conceive, that our Lord may one day, perhaps, think fit (in case this course go on) to make it end with the ending of my life. For so great a torment as this, may well, in my opinion, be sufficient for so great an effect as that; save only, that I deserve not to be so happy. All the Anxiety of my desire at this time is, that I may dye. For I neither remember *Purgatory*, nor yet those great Sins which I have committed, for which I deserved Hell-Fire. But all is now forgotten, through that vehemency of desire to see God; yea, and that vast Solitude, and Desert, wherein I am at that time, seems a much more desirable thing, than all the company in the world. If any thing were able to give her comfort in this case, it would be the treating with some one who had endured the same torment; for now, though she complain thereof, it seems, none will believe her.

It also contributes to her torment, that this pain is so extream, that she would neither be in Solitude, as at other times, nor yet have company; but only of some such persons, to whom she might make her complaint. It is with her, in this case, as with one who hath the halter about his neck; and who, whilst he is even strangling, endeavours, and would fain take his breath. For, just so me-thinks doth this inclination to have company seem to be an effect of our natural frailty, and weakness; that, as this excessive pain seems to put us in eminent danger of death, (for, it is certain, that it doth this; for I have seen my self divers times in this danger, through my great sicknesses, and other occasions, as I have declared; and I believe, that this is as great, as any of those) so the desire and inclination, which, both the Body and Soul have, not to be parted, is that, which seeks such a kind of succour, as it is to take breath; and by expressing it self, and diverting, and complaining, seeks yet for some means, how to live again here below; though still much against the will of the Spirit, or superiour part of the Soul, which would fain not be quit of this Pain.

I know not whether I hit right in what I say, or if I know indeed how to do it; but to the uttermost of my opinion it passes thus, as I have declared. And now your Reverence shall do well to consider, what kind of rest, or ease, it is possible for me to enjoy in this life; since that, which I was wont to find by means of Solitude, and Prayer (for therein, our Lord was pleased to give me great consolations) is now most usually converted into this torment; which yet, withall, is so delicious, and the Soul perceives it to be of so high value, that now she delights in it more, than in all those other Régalo's which she was wont to posseſſe. For she

holds it to be more secure, as being the way of the Cross ; and it contains also, in my opinion, a gulf, of a very great value. For she allows nothing at all to the Body, but pain ; and the Soul both is that, which originally suffers ; and which only feels that joy, and high contentment, which this suffering gives her.

I know not how this can be, but yet it passes so, that (forasmuch as I can understand of my self) I would not change this Favour, which our Lord doth me, (and which proceeds, as I have said, from his hand, and is no way acquired by me, as being wholly Supernatural,) for all those others, which I shall here declare afterward ; I say not, for all them together, but for any one of them, taken severally.

And here let it not be forgotten, how I say, that these impetuositie which are described here, arrived after the Favours, which our Lord did me first ; as also after all that, whereof I have written in this Book, and which I enjoy at this present. And I, finding my self in the beginnings to be in some fear (as in effect, it happens to me almost, whenever it pleases our Lord to do me any favour ; till in the proceeding further on, I receive some kind of security from his Divine Majesty) he willed me not to fear, but to esteem this Favour for greater than all those others were, which he had formerly been pleased to vouchsafe me, because the Soul was purified by this pain ; and burnished, and refined here, as gold in the Crucible ; that so it might be the more capable, to receive those enamels, and ornaments of his gifts and graces ; and so, that was purged away here, which otherwise was to have been so in Purgatory.

I understood very well before, that this was a great Favour ; but yet I remained with much more security after this ; and my Ghostly Father also tells me that it is good. And though I were formerly afraid, because I am so wicked, yet I could never believe, that it was ill ; but rather the very greatness it self of the benefit gave me a kind of fear, when I remembred how far I had been from deserving it. Blessed be our Lord, who is so good, Amen.

It seems, that I have gone from my purpose ; for I was beginning to speak of *Raps* ; and this, which now I have said, is a greater thing, than a Rapt ; and so it leaves those effects in the Soul, which I have related. And therefore, let us now return to speak of *Raps* ; and of that which is most usual therein. I say then, that it seemed to me many times that it left my whole Body so light, that all the weight thereof was utterly gone ; yea and somtimes to such a degree, as, in effect, I knew not, how to set my feet upon the ground ; when the Soul then is in

in *Rapt*, the Body remaitez as if it were utterly dead, being able many times to doe absolutely nothing at all, but as it chanceth to be at the time, so it remaitez, whether it be sitting, or no; or whether it have the hands open, or closed. And, though she seldom loseth her senses, yet it hath happened to me now and then, that they have been totally lost; but this for a very short time at once; but the most usually effect is wont to be, that she finds her self in disorder; yet though she can do nothing of her self as to the exteriour, leaves she not to understand, and hear, as if a thing were spoken to her from far off. I say not, that she understandes, or hears, when she is in the highest part of the *Rapt*: I say, in the highest, at those times, when the Faculties, or Powers are lost; because then they are very straitly united to God; for then, in my opinion, she neither sees, nor hears, nor perceives at all. But (as I was saying, in the former Prayer of Union) this total transforming of the Soul into God is wont to continue but little; yet, for the time it lasts, no Power of the Soul either feels, or doth so much as know what passes there. And this seems to be after this manner; that men may understand, that it is not God's will, that we should know it, and, belike, we are not capable thereof; at least it hath passed thus with me.

But now your Reverence will peradventure ask me, How then it comes to pass, that a *Rapt* shoud last so many hours? To which I answer, that which hath often occurred to me, is this; That (as I have declared already, in the former Prayer) we enjoy Raps, with certain intervals and interruptions. For, the Soul doth many times engulf it self; or rather (to speak more properly) our Lord engulfs the Soul into him, and entertains her so a while; and then after it there remains only the Will united. Me-thinks, that stir, and busle of the other two Faculties is like those little Needles of Sun-Dials, which usually doth never stand still; yet, when the Sun of Justice hath a mind to it, he makes them stable, and firm; now this, I say, lasts but a very little while. But since the impulse was great, and the exaltation of the Spirit high, the Will remaitez engulfed still, and behaves it self like a Sovereign Lady over all those operations which concern the Body; for if those other two said unquiet, and disorderly Powers, will disturb, and distract the Will, yet of enemies, the fewer the better; the Senses are not suffered to divert it. And so it is, that they are suspended, because our Lord is so pleased; and, for the most part, the eyes are shut, though yet we had no intention to shut them; and though, by accident, they may be open somtimes, yet (as I said before) they doth not fix on, or consider at all, what she sees.

But now, the body here is much lesse able to do any thing with it self, as to that time, when the said Powers shall returne to be united; for then, there will not be much for it to do. And therefore let him, to whom our Lord shall vouchsafe this Favour, not be discomfited, if then he find both the Body, to be as it were bound up many hours; and by turnes also his understanding, and Memory to be diverted. True it is, that these faculties are ordinarily, in this case, even drenched in the praises of God: and in desiring also, to comprehend, and understand that, which hath passed with themselves; and yet, even for this purpose, they are not very well awake, but rather like some one who hath slept, and dreamt, and is not yet come very well again to himself. I declare my thoughts so largely herein; because I know, there are persons at this time, yea and in this very place, to whom our Lord doth these Favours; and yet, if they, who direct them, have not experienced this, perhaps they will conceive, that they are to be, as it were, dead in these Raps; especially, if these Directours be not learned men. And it is matter of grief, to consider, how much it suffered, by means, of such Ghostly Fathers, as do not understand this busyness; which I will declare afterward. Perhaps I know not well what I say; but your Reverence will easily understand, if I hit any thing right, since our Lord hath already given you experience therein; though yet, because it is not long since you began, you will not peradventure have considered it so much, as I.

Now, though I have endeavoured much, and many times; yet the Body hath not strength, wherewith to stir it self, but the Soul carries it all along with her. The person, who was sick, doth thus recover health many times; and she, who was full of weakness, and paine, recovers strength. For they be great things, which are bestowed in these cases; and sometimes our Lord is pleased (as I was saying) that the Body should also feel its part of joy, since already it yeilds obedience to that which the Soul desires. When she is returned to her self, it will happen to her (if the Rapt have been great) to go a day, or two, or sometimes three, with the Powers so absorpt, and, as it were, stupified, that they seem not to be altogether themselves. Here comes-in the paine, to be able to know again how to live; here are our feathers imped, to make a strong flight; and here, are the sick ones fallen off; here is the Banner of Christ our Lord totally raised-up, and displayed, and it seems, as if the Captain of this Fort, either gets up himself, or else is instantly carried-up to the highest Tower there, to plant the said standard, for the glory of God. She looks now upon them who are below, as one, who

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is already in safety ; for now she is so far from fearing dangers, that she rather wishes them ; as a person, to whom, in some sort, a security is given, for obtaining victory. She sees now very clearly, how little all worldly things ought to be esteemed ; or rather, how direct *Nothing* they are. He who is seated high is able to discover much. Already, she renounces the having any Will ; and is resolved, to have no other will, than that, which her Lord gives her ; and thereupon she petitions him, and surrenders him also the Keyes of her Will. Lo here she that was the Gardiner, become the Governour of a Castle ; nor will she do any thing at all, but according to the will of the Lord thereof ; nor will she be Mistresse so much as of her self, no, nor of any thing ; nor even of any single Well of that Garden. And, if there be any thing in her which is good, she desires, that his Divine Majesty may dispose thereof ; for, she will not from that time forward possesse any kind of thing, as having propriety therein ; but covets, that all things may be entirely done in conformity to the will of our Lord, and for his glory.

Now indeed all these things really are wont to passe in this manner, if the Rapt be true ; and the Soul remains with those advantages, and benefits, which are related ; and, if these do not follow, I should be apt to doubt very much that they were not Raps, on the part of God ; but should rather be inclined to fear, that they were of that kind of Ravings whereof S. *Vincent* speaks. This I understand ; and have seen by experience, that the Soul is wont, in these cases, to become a Lady over all, and to acquire so much liberty, in les than an hour, that she cannot even know her self ; she well understands, that all this is none of her own, nor doth she know, how she comes to obtain so great a blessing ; but she understands clearly the exceeding great benefit, and advantage, which every one of these Raps brings to her. There is none, who can credit this, but such an one as hath learnt it, by experience ; and therefore men believe not the poor Soul, which they have seen to be wicked, and now find so very soon to pretend to do certain things of so high importance ; for instantly she resolves, not to be content to serve our Lord in small matters, but in the very greatest she can. Now the world is apt to conceive such endeavours are but impertinencies, and temptations ; yet, if men would but understand, that they are not things, which grow from her self, but from our Lord, to whom she hath already delivered up the keyes of her Will, they would not so much wonder at it. For my part I am of opinion, that a Soul which comes once to this state doth already neither say, nor do any thing of her self, but that this Sovereign King takes care of all.

O my dear God ! and how clearly doth a Soul see here the sense , of that Verse ; and how it is to be understood , that both he had reason , and that all the world should have it , to desire the *wings of a Dove*. For it is easily and clearly to be understood of that *Flight* , which the Spirit makes , whereby to raise it self above all Creatures ; and , in the first place , from , and above her self . But this is a sweet *Flight* ; a gustfull , and pleasant *Flight* ; and a *Flight* without noise . What kind of dominion doth such a Soul possess , which our Lord doth once conduct to this pitch , that she may be able to look down upon all things , without being once intangled by any of them ! And how full of confusion will she now be , for that time , wherein she was intangled before ! And how much will she be amazed , to look back upon that blindnes of hers ! How full , of compassion , for such as do yet remain therein ? especially if they be persons of Prayer , and such , as it pleases God to regale . She would here cry out very loud , to make men understand how mightily they are abused , and deceived ; and so the also doth , sometimes . And then they rain down whole showers of persecutions upon her head ; they treat her as one , who wants Humility , and who employs her self to teach those persons , of whom she might do well to learn ; and especially , if she be a woman , then come they in to condemn her ; and they may have reason , because they know not , by what impulse she is moved . Who , as she , knows not , how to defend her self on the one side ; so also can she not forbear , on the other , to unbeguile those persons whom she loves , and whom she desires to see unfettered from the Prison of this life ; for , that state , wherein she was , neither is , nor seems less than a Prison . She is also much affl eted with the thought of that time , wherein she took any care of points of Honour ; and for the gross error , wherein she was , to believe that to be Honour , which the world calls Honour ; for she sees , that it was an abominable lye ; and yet , that every body lives in the practice of it . But now , this soul understands , That , right Honour , is built not upon a lye , but truth ; esteeming that to be worth somewhat , which indeed is so ; and holding that , which indeed is nothing , in no account at all ; since all is nothing , and less than nothing , which comes to have an end , and , pleasest not God . She laughs at her self , for the time , wherein she made any account of Monies , or had been covetous thereof ; though yet , in this last particular , I do not believe , (and certainly , it is true) that I ever had any fault to confess ; but it will have been fault enough , to have held them in any manner of account . If , with them I had been able to buy that good , which now I find in my self , I might have esteemed them very much : But now , the Soul perceives , that this

is gotten by leaving all things. And what, in fine, is it that can be bought with this Money, which we so much desire? Is it any thing of true worth? Is it any thing which is durable? Or to what end, do we desire it? A miserable kind of repose, procured by that which costs us so dear; for Hell is many times gotten therewith; and men purchase thereby everlasting Fire, and endless Torment. O that all men would at length resolve, to hold it but for unprofitable earth! How orderly would the world then proceed! How free would all places be from unjust contracts! and how sincerely would all men perform acts of friendship, if once there raign'd no interest, either of Honour, or money, in the mindes of men? For my part I conceive, that all would be remedied.

This Soul sees also then that there is a great blindness in the conceit, which men frame about the delights of this World; and how we buy nothing, by their means, even for this very life, which we lead here, but labour, and disquiet. How great disquiet, and how little content? and in fine, what a deal of labouring in vain? And here is the Soul able to discern not only gross Cobwebs, and great faults, but even any poor grain of dust, how little soever it may be; and so, how much soever she may have laboured to perfect her self, if once the Sun shine bright, and strike it through with those beames, in good earnest, she will find it to be dusty enough still. It is like a Glas full of water, which you will think very clear, and pure, unless the Sun shine upon it; but if you see it once pierced by those beames, you will find it to be all full of motes. This Comparison is very punctually true; for, before the Soul is in this **Ex-tasie**, she conceives her self to have been very careful not to offend God; and that she performed it according to the uttermost of her power; but yet being come once so far as that this Sun of Justice shines upon her, which makes her open her eyes, she then sees so many motes therein, that she would be glad to shut them again; for she is not yet become so true an Eaglet, of this swift and strong Eagle, which bred her, as that she can be able to look earnestly upon this Sun. But, how little soever she can hold them open, she sees her self all impure; and calls that Verse to mind, which saith: *Who shall be just in thy presence?* When she beholds this Divine Sun, the brightness of it dazles her sight; when she looks on her self, the olay stops it up; and so this poor Dove is blind; yea, and it happens many times, that she remains so wholly blind, being absorpt, amazed, and, as it were, vanished away with so many mighty greatnesses, as she then discovers. Here, finally, is true Humility acquired; not caring at all, either to speak well of her self, or yet, that others should do it. And our Lord divides, and disposes of the Fruit of this Garden;

not she ; and so, there sticks nothing of it to her fingers. All the good, which she hath, goes on still addressed to God ; and if she be drawn to say any thing of her self, it is for his glory ; for she knows, that she hath no share therein ; and cannot be ignorant thereof, even though she would ; as discerning it by the very sight of her eyes, which, whether she will, or no, are shut towards the things of this world, and kept open to the understanding of Truths.

C H A P. XXI.

She prosecutes, and finishes this last Degree of Prayer. She declares, what the Soul finds therein, when she returns to live again in the world; and the Light also which our Lord gives concerning the deceits and errors thereof.

Therefore now to finish that, which I was about, I say, That there is here no more now any need, that the Soul should give any new consent, since already she hath given it all, and knowes, that she hath with her will, delivered her self wholly up into his hands ; and that she cannot deceive him, who knows all things ; for it is not, as things pass here, in this world ; where all this life of ours is full of nothing, but deceits, and duplices ; and, when you think you have fully gotten the good will of any one, by the shew he makes, you after come to understand, that all is tricks, and lyes ; and no body can tell, how to live in a world of so much busines ; especially, if there be any little interest of the Parties. But blessed is that Soul, which our Lord comes once to draw to the knowledg of real Truths. O what a condition were this for Kings ! and how much would it import them more, to gain this great advantage, than to get large Dominions, and States ? What restitude would there be found in the Kingdome ? How many mischiefs, would have been forborn already, and would also be forborn hereafter ? here is no fear to lose life, or honour, for the love of God ; but rather such losses as these would go for a great blessing amongst such, as ought to carry another manner of respect, to the honour of our Lord, than all those their subjects below them. For Kings are the men, whom those others follow ; and in this case, such Kings would lose a thousand Kingdomes for advancing one step further towards the augmentation of the Faith, or the procuring some more light to Hereticks ; and good reason : For, it is

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another manner of busyness, to purchase a Kingdome that will never end. And to a Soul that shall tast but one single drop of this water, all this world here appears loathsome and offensive.

But now, if the Soul of such a person should be once engulfed into this water; what strange effects would it produce? O my Lord, if thou shouldest put me in a condition to be able to publish this truth with a loud voice, they would yet believe me no more, than they do others, who know how to publish the same after a much better manner. Yet at least I should give satisfaction to my self; and, me-thinks, I should set my life at a low rate, upon condition, that I could make but some one of these single Truths be well understood. And yet I know not how I should carry my self afterward; for there is no trust at all to be had in me, being that miserable creature, which I am. Yet still I have so great im-pulses to utter, and declare these things to such as be in authority, that, me-thinks, they do even consume me. And yet, since I can do no more, I return, O my Lord, towards thee, to seek remedy for all inconveniences; for thou, O my Lord, knowest well, how highly glad I would be to dispossess my self of all these Favours, which of thy goodness thou hast vouchsafed to do me (provided always, that I might still remain in condition never to offend thee more) and to resign them up to Kings and Princes; for then I know, that it would be impossible for them, either to permit those things to be done, which are permitted; or to fail to receive extraordinary blessings. O make them, my God, understand, to how much they are obliged, since thou wert pleased (by what I have heard) to honour them in such sort, upon earth, as that, when thou takest any of them away, there is some kind of signification thereof, even in the Heavens. And, when I think of this, it breeds a kind of devotion in me, that thou, O my King, maist be pleased to make them hereby, understand that they ought to imitate thee in their life; since there happen to be certain appearances, and signes, in Heaven, at their death as there was, when thy self camest to dye. I presume very far; but I beseech your Reverence tear it, if you mislike it, and believe, that I would be glad to speak it better, if I were present with them; and if I could tell how; and especially, if I thought that they would believe me; for I recommend them very much to God; and I wish, that it might do them good. All is done by adventuring ones life; and I desire very often, to lose mine; for that were to hazard little, for the gaining of much. For scarce doth any truly live; considering how visible that great deceit and error is, which we carry about us; and with what blindness we converse in this world.

But, when once the Soul is come to this pass, they are not bare desires, which she hath to the service of God; for then his Divine Majesty gives her strength also to put them in execution. Nor can any thing be represented to her, wherein she thinks she may serve him, upon which she will not cast her self all at once; and yet she will conceive she doth nothing; because she sees clearly, that all things are meerly nothing, save the pleasing God. The only trouble is, that no occasion of trouble offers it self to persons so unprofitable, as I am. But, O thou my Good, be pleased, that once there may come a time, wherein I may be able to pay the least mite of all that great service, which I owe thee. Ordain thou things, O my Lord, in what sort thou wilt; so that this poor creature of thine may be able to serve thee in some thing. There hath been other manner of women in the world, who have done heroical things for love of thee; but I am good for nothing, but to talk; and so it is not thy pleasure, O my Lord, to employ me in the putting any thing in execution; all passeth away in words, and desires how I would serve thee; yea and even I have not liberty for this, peradventure because I should fail in all. But strengthen thou my Soul, and dispose of it first, O thou, the Good of all Goods, my dear *Jesus*; and then ordain presently means whereby it may do somewhat for thee; and that there may be no such person, as may endure to receive so much, and pay nothing. Let it cost, O Lord, what it can; but let not these hands of mine appear alwayes so empty in thy presence; since Rewards are to be given, according to the Works. Behold, here is my Life, here is my Honour, and here is my Will; and thou knowest, that I have given it all to thee; and am entirely thine; and therefore dispose of me according to thine own good pleasure. I see, O my Lord, very well, how little I am able to do; but yet being now come to thee, and having mounted up to this Tower, from which Truths are truly discovered, if thou depart not from me, there is nothing, which I shall not be able to perform; and if thou depart, how little soever that may be, I shall go, where I was; that is, to Hell.

O what it is, for a Soul, which finds her self, in such condition as this, to be put to return again, to converse in the world; and to behold, and see the Comedy or Puppet-Play of this so ill-ordered Life! and to spend time in complying with this Body of ours, by sleeping, and eating! All this now wearies the Soul, which knows not how to escape from thence, but findes it self chained and caught. It then sees much more evidently the captivity, wherein we remain, by these Bodies of ours, and by the misery of these lives, which we lead; and we come to know the reason, which

which S. *Paul* had, to beseech God, to deliver him from it; now she crys out aloud with him, and begs liberty of his Divine Majesty, as I have formerly said; But now, this is often done with so very great impulse of mind, that the Soul would fain get out of the Body in purfuit of this liberty; and, in the mean time, since she is not freed, she walks up and down the world, like one sold for some Slave, to serve, and drudg in a strange Country; and that which afflicts her yet more is, that she cannot meet with many, who will lament with her, and desire that which she desires; for they ordinarily, desire to live longer. O that once we were not tyed to any thing! and that we did not place our contentment in any thing of this world! How would then the pain, which we should find to live thus always without God, appease, and temper the fear of death, through the desire, which by this means, we should have of attaining to the fruition of a true life!

Sometimes I am considering, when as such a Creature, as I, to whom our Lord hath given this Light, with such a cold charity, and so poor repose, as I enjoy, (since my life hath deserved no better) do yet many times so exceedingly resent the seeing my self in this banishment of mine, what kind of fence, and feeling, that should be, which Saints have had in this case; and what kind of commotion, a S. *Paul*, and a S. *Marie Magdalen*, and such others, like them, must find in themselves, in whom this fire of the Love of God increased to such a degree. It must certainly have been a continual Martyrdom to them. To me it seemis, that those who afford me some ease, and with whose conversation I am relieved, are such persons, in whom I meet with these desires; I say desires, with deeds; I say with deeds. For, there are certain people in the world, who believe themselves, absolutely untyed from the world, and so they publish, that they are; and indeed it is very fit they were; because their profession requires as much; and so also do those many years, since they began to enter into the way of Perfection: But yet such a Soul knows well the difference, even from a far off, between such as desire these things but in words; and such others, as confirm their words, by works. For he knows how to understand very well the little good, which these do in the world, and the much, which is done by those others; and indeed this is such a kind of thing, as whosoever hath experience very easily discerns.

And now I have set down the effects, which those Raps that proceed from the Spirit of God are wont to produce. It is true, that some of them do more, and some less; I say less, because, though in the beginnings the Spirit works such effects, yet then, the effects are not seen experimen-

tally by works, nor can it be yet so well perceived that they have them ; and besides, the perfection thereof goes increasing, and the Soul goes procuring, that there may now be no memory of former Cobweb-work ; and this requires some time. And mean-while by how much the more Humility, and the Love of our Lord increases in the Soul : so much the more sweet, and fresh odour will these Flowres of vertue give both to themselves, and others. It is true, that our Lord knows how to work so well upon a Soul in one of these Raps, that there will not much remain for the Soul her self to work, towards the acquiring of perfection. For none is able to believe without experience, how much it pleases our Lord to bestow upon a Soul in such an occasion ; nor is there any diligence of ours which can, in my opinion, attain it. I say not, but that, by the Favour of our Lord, such as employ themselves many years by those wayes which, they prescribe, who have written of Prayer, both concerning the beginning, and proceeding thereof, may arrive to perfection, and to a considerable untying, and loosening themselves from the things of this world with much pains, but never in so short a time as here our Lord is pleased to work it, and that presently, without any labour of ours ; And he then resolutely drawes the Soul from the earth, and gives her an absolute dominion over all things, which are therein ; though yet there be not in this Soul any more true value, or merit, than there was in mine. Nor do I know how to exaggerate this point more ; for, in mine there was, in effect, none at all. The reaon why his Divine Majestie doth it is, because he is pleased to do it ; and he doth it also just so, as he is pleased ; and, though somtimes there be no disposition in her at all, to receive it, yet he disposes also the same to receive that benefit, which his Divine Majestie is pleased to impart. So that he gives it not alwayes, because the Gardiner hath deserved it, by dressing up and cultivating his Garden well (though yet it be very certain, that whosoever doth this as he ought, and procures withal, his dis-engagement from things of this world, will never fail to be Regaled by him) but somtimes, because it is his pleasure (as I have said) to shew his power, and greatness, even upon the most barren Soil ; and to prepare it for the receiving all kind of good. So that, now she seems not in some sort to have so much as a Power to return to live in the offending of God, as she was wont ; but she hath her thoughts so habituated to understand what is Truth indeed, that all besides seems but sport for children. She smiles also to her self somtimes, when she finds certain grave persons, who live in the exercise of prayer, and Religion, make account of certain points of Honour, which such

a Soul as this, holds now directly under her feet. Some will say, this is but discretion, and a preserving of their dignity, and rank ; that so they may be able to do the more good ; But that other Soul understands very well that they might have profited more in one day, if they would have desired their authority, and honour for the love of God, than they would do in ten years, by upholding it. Thus doth this Soul lead a certain troublesome life, and is ever subject to the Cross ; though yet ever going on with increase : And, though the persons who use to treat with her, conceive her sometimes to be already near the top of Perfection, yet do they find shortly after, that still she growes to be more improved ; for our Lord goes ever favouring her, more and more. God himself is her Soul ; and it is he, who hath already taken the charge of her into his hands ; and enlightens her ; and seemes to assist and guard her continually after a special manner, both that she may not offend him, and also by favouring, and stirring her up to serve him.

When once my Soul arrived so far, as that God was pleased to do her this great Favour, my miseries did cease, and our Lord gave me strength to quitt them ; and it moved me no more to be afterward in those occasions of imperfection ; and with persons who had formerly been wont to distract me, than if I had not been there at all ; nay rather that helped me, which was wont to hurt me ; and all things were now fit means to make me know God more, and to love him better ; and to see, how deeply I was obliged to him ; and to grieve me, for what I had been.

I well understood withal, that this came no way from me ; nor had I gained it by any diligence of mine, nor had I even had time for it ; but only his Divine Majesty, of his own meer goodness, gave me strength for this purpose. From the time when our Lord was pleased to afford me the Favour of these Raps, to this present, this strength hath gon on increasing ; and he, of his bounty, hath also held me fast with his hand, that I might not return back again any more. And now me-thinks, (as it is true) that I do almost nothing on my part ; but I understand, in a very evident manner, that our Lord is he, who works ; and therefore I am of opinion, that the person to whom our Lord shews these Favours (supposing ever, that, with all humility, and fear, he will understand, that it is our Lord himself, who doth them, and that we do in a manner nothing,) may put himself into any company ; and that, how distracte and vicious soever it be, it will not hurt, or move him at all ; but that rather (as I said) it will help him, and minister him

him some occasion of reaping more advantage for his own good.

These are already made strong Souls, which our Lord is pleased to choose for the benefiting of others; though yet still it must be considered, that this strength proceeds not from themselves. When once our Lord brings a Soul so near himself, as I have shewed, he goes by little and little communicating very great secrets to her. Here are the true Revelations, in this Extasie; and other great Favours, and Visions; And all these things serve to humble, and fortify the Soul; and to make her less esteem the things of this Life; as also to know more clearly the greatness of that reward, which our Lord hath prepared for such as serve him. His Divine Majesty grant, that the excessive bounty, which he hath vouchsafed to shew towards this miserable sinner, may prove some part of a motive, to make them who shall read this Discourse, encourage, and animate themselves, to leave all things wholly for God, since his Divine Majesty is pleased to reward so abundantly. For, we see, and that clearly, what recompence, benefit, and retrIBUTions, he is pleased to allow, even in this life, to such as serve him; what then will he do in the other?

C H A P . X X I I .

In which she discourses how secure a way it is, for persons, who give themselves to Contemplation, not to raise-up their Spirit to high things, unless our Lord raise them up; and that the Humanity of Christ our Lord is indeed to be the means towards the highest Contemplation.

Will here declare a certain thing, which is in my opinion very important; and, if your Reverence think fit, it may serve you, for a word of advise; yea and perhaps you may have need thereof. I have read in some Bookes, written of Prayer, which affirme, that, howsoever the Soul is not able of it self to arrive to that State, whereof I spake before, (because all that is Supernatural, which our Lord workes there) yet she may be able to help her self therein by raising-up her Spirit above all things created; and that so she having raised it up with humility, after many yeares first passed through the *Purgative* way, and some advance made in the *Illuminative*, they advise in particular manner that men should separate, and abstract themselves from all kind of imagination of corporeal things, and that so they should approach, and reach to the contemplation of the Divinity. For they say, that, although

though it be even the very Humanity of Christ our Lord, yet is it some impediment to such, as proceed thus-far; yea and that it hinders them from the most perfect kind of Contemplation.

To this purpose they alledge that which our *Lord* said to his *Apostles*, (I mean when himself was ascending-up to Heaven,) of the coming of the *Holy Ghost* down upon them, which would not be accomplished till himself were retired out of their sight. But, for my part I conceive, that if they had then had that Lively Faith, of our *Lord's* being both *God and Man*, (which they had, after the coming of the *Holy Ghost*) his Corporal Presence would have done them no hurt at all. For he held no such discourse to his *Blessed Mother*, though she loved him more, than they all. So that these men alledged this passage, because it seemes to them, (in regard, that all this action of Prayer is a work of Spirit) that every Corporeal Object will divert, and hinder it; and that, to consider themselves, after a manner totally abstracted from Creatures; and that God is on all sides of them; and to see themselves engulfed in him, is the thing, which they should endeavour to obtain.

Now, this I like well sometimes; but yet, to divide our selves wholly from the person of *Christ* our *Lord*, and to bring that Divine Body of his into the account and rank with these miseries of ours, or with the rest of the created world, I can by no means endure it; his Divine Majesty grant, that I may be able to make my self be understood.

I will not contradict them, because they are learned men, and spirituals; and who know well, what they say; and it pleases God to carry, and conduct Souls, by several wayes: How he conducted mine, I will now declare; for in the rest I will not interpose my self, but only speak of the danger wherein I found I was, because I would conform my self to what I had read. I will believe, that whosoever shall have arrived to the State of Union, and not have passed further on, so far as to have Raps, and Visions, together with such other Favours, as our *Lord* is wont to impart to Souls, may hold that, which is spoken of, to be better, as I also did. But yet, if I had continued therein, I believe, I should never have arrived to that pitch, wherein now I am. For, in my opinion, it is an error; though perhaps it may be I am the person deceived; but I will relate what happened to me. Whilst I was in want of a Directour, and went reading the Bookes aforesaid, whereby I thought I grew to understand somewhat; (though by little and little I came indeed to find afterward, that, if our *Lord* had not been my teacher, I should have learnt very little by those Books;) For really it was nothing which I understood, till his Divine Majesty was pleased to make me know it by

experience; nor indeed, did I know, what I did) when afterward I came so far, as to have something of Prayer Supernatural (I mean, the Prayer of Quiet) I procured to dismiss all kind of Corporeal Objects; though yet, I durst not proceed to the raising & exalting my Soul; For, considering that I was always so very wicked, I saw, that this would be a great presumption in me; But then I came to think that I felt a kind of Presence of God in me, after a particular manner, as indeed I did; and I procured to recollect my self with him: And this is a very savory, and gustful Prayer, if our Lord assist a Soul particularly therein; and the delight of it is great; and when both the profit, and pleasure, it gives, was thus observed, there could be no meanes to make me return againe to the Humanity of Christ, because I conceived in effect that it was an impediment to me.

O thou Lord of my Soul, and my Good! *Jesus Christ*, who wert Crucified; I never call to mind this opinion, which I entertained, but I am afflicted by it. For I conceive my self to have committed a huge Treason therein against thee; though out of ignorance. I having been so particularly devoted to the person of Christ our Lord, throughout my whole life; for this other proceeding of mine, occurred in the latter part thereof; I say, in the latter part, immediately before our Lord vouchsafed me those Favours, of *Raps* and *Visions*.

I continued a very little while in this opinion; and so I came quickly back, to delight my self with this dear Lord of mine; and especially when I received the *Blessed Sacrament* I ever desired to have some Image and Picture, of him before mine eyes, since I was not able to carry him so deeply engraven upon my Soul, as I willed. But is it possible O My dear Lord, that ever any such thought, as this, should be able to get into my heart, even for one single hour, as that thou wert to hinder my obtaining my greatest Good? Alas, from whence came all the benefits which ever I received, but only from thee? I will not think that really I was faulty herein; but rather pity my self for that which certainly proceeded from ignorance in me. And so, thou didst vouchsafe, through thy goodness, to redress it; by helping me to one afterward who might deliver me out of this error, and besides also, by making me to see thee so often, as I shall declare hereafter; that so I might the more clearly understand, how great that ignorance of mine was; and that I might publish the same to many, as I have done already; and that now I might also record it here.

For my part, I conceive, that the reason, why many Souls get not more forward, and why they reach not to obtain greater liberty of Spi-

rit when they arrive to Prayer of Union, is this very thing. And I conceive there are two reasons, upon which I may well ground this my opinion; and though perhaps, that be of no moment, which I am going to utter, yet I will not forbear to do it; because I have found by experience, that it went very ill with my Soul, till it pleased our Lord, to give it this light. For all those Joyes, which she took, came to her but by sups, and gulps; and when once they were past, she found not her self with such company, as she had need of afterward for the enduring of tribulations, and temptations.

One of these reasons, why men advance no further is, that there is peradventure some little want of Humility though so hidden, and concealed, that it is not perceived. And who will ever be so proud, and wretched as I; who when he should have laboured all his life, and made as many Prayers, and suffered as many Pennances, and endured as many Persecutions, as might be imagined, would not yet find himself rich enough, and abundantly rewarded, and payd for all, when our Lord gives him leave to remain with S. John? at the foot of the Croſs, I know not, into what brain it would sink, not to be content with such a felicity, as this except mine; who was ever a loser so many wayes, in all those things, whereby I ought to have been a gainer.

Now, though our miserable frail condition, or perhaps sickness, should not permit us, because it is painful to be alwayes reflecting upon the *Passion* of our Lord; yet at least, what should hinder us from remaining with him, risen again; since we have him so neare us, in the *Blessed Sacrament* where he now is glorified? Nor need we behold him there so distressed; and so afflicted; so torn in peices; so trickling bloods; so wearied in those rugged High-Wayes; so persecuted by those, whom he benefited so highly; and the while, not so much, as believed in by his very *Apostles*. For, it is true, one hath not alwayes the heart, to be able, to meditate upon so excessive afflictions, as he felt. But lo here, we have him without pain, and full of glory, giving strength to some, and courage to others, before he ascended up to Heaven.

He makes himself our constant Companion in the most *Holy Sacrament*; yea and seems, as if it had not been in his power to depart any one moment from us; and that now it should yet have been in mine to part from thee, O my Lord! and this, that I might serve thee so much the better. Let it pass my dear Lord, that, when I sinned against thee formerly, I did not know thee; but that now, when I came to know thee, I should fancy a means to my self of growing yet a greater gainer by this way: O what an ill course was that? and now I find, that indeed

deed I had utterly lost my way, if thou, O Lord hadst not restored me to it ; for, in seeing that thou art neer to me, I have seen that I have all good things, with thee. Nor do I ever meet with any affliction or trouble, but as soon as I consider, in what posture thou stoodst before those Judges, it grows instantly, to be very easily born. With the presence of so dear a Friend, and under the conduct of so good a Captain, as was pleased to put himself in the foremost rank, that so he might suffer most, and first, there is nothing which may not well be endured. He afflits, and gives strength, and courage ; yea and never failes. He is a very fast, and true Friend ; and I see clearly, and I have seen it since that time, that to the end we may be able to content God, and that he may pour great Favours down upon us, he is pleased, that all should pass by the hands of this most Sacred Humanity ; in which his Divine Majesty hath declared, *That he was much delighted*. I have seen this truth by experience very many times ; and our Lord himself hath told me so. I have also clearly seen, that we are to enter in by this Gate, if we desire his Soveraigne Majesty should communicate great secrets to our Souls.

So that, Sir, I wish your Reverence , not to seek any other way than this ; though you should be even upon the very top of Contemplation ; for here you shall find your self safe ; since this Lord of ours is he , by whose means we receive all Benedictions ; and he will instruct you , by looking upon his life ; for he is the best Original, and Pattern. Indeed, what can we desire more , than to have so good a Friend by our sides , who will never give us over in our afflictions, and tribulations, as they, of this world are wont to do ? Blessed is that man who loves him really and indeed, and who alwaies carries him close to him.

Let us look upon the Glorious S. *Paul*, who had the name of *Jesus* ever in his mouth ; as who carryed it deeply imprinted in his heart , since I understood this abstracted course, whereof I spoke, I have reflected upon divers great Contemplatives very carefully, and I find they went no other way than this. S. *Francis* shewes it plainly, by the Wounds ; S. *Anthony of Padua*, by the Infant ; S. *Bernard* delighted himself much in the Humanity of our Lord ; and so also did S. *Katherine of Sienna* ; together with many other Saints, as your Reverence knows better, than I.

This departing and abstracting ones self from all Corporeal Objects , must, it seems be good, since perlons so Spiritual affirme it ; but yet, in my opinion, this must be understood of a Soul far advanced ; for , till then, it is evident enough , that the Creatour is to be sought by meanes of the Creatures. All depends upon the Favour , which our Lord is
plea-

pleased to shew to any Soul. That, which I would fain make to be understood, is, that the most Sacred Humanity of Christ must not be brought into that account; and let this point be well understood, wherein I would fain know how to declare my self. When God is pleased to suspend all the Powers of the Soul in those kindes of Prayer, which have been related, we have seen plainly that this Presence of Christ, is taken from us, whether we will, or no; well, and good then, let it be gone; for, that kind of loss is a happy one, whereby we come to enjoy more of that which we conceive our selves to have lost; for then the Soul employs her self wholly upon loving him, whom the understanding hath so much endeavoured to know; and loves that, which she did not comprehend; and now joyes in that, wherein she could not have so well joyed, but only by losing her self, for her greater gain. But now, that we should, by art, and of set purpose accustom our selves not to procure with our whole power to carry always in our eyes (and I would to God, it were always) this most Sacred Humanity of Christ, this, I say, is that which I like not; and is a way of making the Soul walk in the Ayre, as we use to say. For it seems, that she hath no firme, and stable support, howsoever she may make her self believe, that she goes full of God. It is a great matter, to set before us our Lords Humanity, whilst our selves live, and are humane, and this is that other inconvenience, I speak of: the first, I began to relate, is a little want of humility, in presuming to raise the Soul, before our Lord raiseth her, and not to content her self with meditating upon a thing so pretious, but that she will needs be a Mary, before she have taken the pains of Martha. If our Lord be pleased, that we be Mary, there is nothing to be feared, though it should be upon the very first day; But yet let us stay and moderate our selves, as I think I was saying before; this small mote of little humility, that seems nothing, doth a great deal of hurt to our advancing in the way of Contemplation.

2. To come now to the Second point; We are no Angels, but have Bodies; and to desire to make our selves Angels, whilst yet we are upon earth, (and especially if so earthly, as I was,) is a folly: But our thoughts in the ordinary way have need of a kind of itay, or resting place; though yet sometimes the Soul may go so out of her self, yea and many times may be so full of God, that perhaps she hath no need to recollect her self by means of any thing created. But this is not a thing ordinary; and in busynesses, and persecutions, and troubles, when she cannot enjoy so much Quiet; and in the times also of Dryness, and dulness, Christ our Lord is wont to be a very good friend; whilst we consider him as

man ; and behold him full of weaknesses, and afflictions, he is good company for us ; and when once we are a little accustomed , it is very easy to find him near to us ; though yet some such times will occur, as that we shall be able to do neither the one, nor the other.

Upon this reason, it will bewell, to do that whereof I have spoken already, namely, not to pretend, & procure any sensible consolation of Spirit, come what will ; to imbrace the Crofs of our Lord is a great matter. This Lord of ours, was forsaken of all manner of comfort, and they left him all alone, in his afflictions ; but yet let not us do so; For he will reach us his hand, & raise us better up ; than all our own diligences; and yet he will absent himself also, when he shall think fit ; &, when he shall think fit, he will also draw the Soul out of it self, as I have said before. God is very well pleased to see a Soul with Humility, introduce his Son for her Mediator, & loves it so very much, that when his Divine Majesty shall incline to raise her up to great Contemplation, the same Soul holds her self unworthy , and cryes out, with S. Peter : *Depart from me, O my Lord, for I am a sinful man.* I have tryed this very thing by experience ; and thus hath God conducted my Soul. Let others therefore goe by some other short cut, as they please ; that which I have been able to understand is, that all this Structure of Prayer is grounded upon Humility ; and that the more the Soul is abased in that holy exercise , the more doth God exalt her. Nor do I remember, that ever he shewed me any of those singler Mercies, of which I shall speak afterward, but, when I found my Soul as it were annihilated, by seeing my self to be so wicked; and sometimes, his Divine Majesty took care to let me understand certaine things, towards the making me know my self so much the better, which I could never have told how to imagine.

But I am of opinion, that when the Soul doth any thing on her part to help her self on, as aforesaid, towards that Prayer of Union ; howsoever, for the present, it may seem to benefit, yet the building will quickly fall, as wanting a sound foundation ; and I am afraid, she will never arrive to true Poverty of Spirit, which consists in not desiring consolation, or gust in Prayer ; (for, all those of this world are forsaken already) but consolation in affliction for the love of him, who alwaye lived in them ; and in remaining also quiet in those very afflictions, and aridities ; for though they fail not to have some little trouble thereat ; yet doth it not give them any such disquiet, and paine, as some give themselves by conceiving, that, if they be not always labouring with their Understanding, and have not a sensible devotion, all is lost ; as if they could deserve so great a good by the paines they take. I say not

not, that they should not procure, and maintain themselves with much care in the Presence of God ; but that, though they be not able to obtain so much as one good thought, (as I have said else-where) yet they should not torment themselves ; we all are unprofitable Servants ; and what can we conceive, that we shall be ever able to do ? Our Lord is pleased, that we know this truth ; and that we become, like those poor little Asses to turn that wheel about, whereby the said Water is to be gotten ; who, though they be put in blindfold, and know not what they do, will yet get-up more water, than the Gardiner, with all the diligences he can use, we must walk in this way with liberty of Spirit, putting our selves into the hands of God. If his Divine Majesty shall be pleased to advance us, to be of his Chamber, and Council, we must go with a good will ; but if not, we must be content to serve in inferior employments, and not to seat our selves in the best place, as I have said else-where.

God hath more care of us, than we our selves ; and knowes, for what every one is fit ; to what end therefore doth it serve for one to governe himself, whose whole Will already is disposed of, and given away to God ? In my opinion it is lesse to be tollerated here, than in the First Degree of Prayer ; and it doth us much more harm ; for these are Supernatural blessings. If a man have an ill voice, how much soever he shall enforce himself to sing, the voice will not be made good by it ; but if God will give him, a good one, he needs not be turning it before hand. Let us therefore alwaies humbly pray him, to shew us favour ; but let the Soul be kept low, and resigned, yet withall confident in the greatness of God.

And now, when she hath gotten leave to remain at the feet of Christ, let her not stir from thence, but continue here willingly ; and let her imitate the Blessed Magdalen ; for, if here she shall abide resolutely, and Persevering, God will not faile at length to conduct her into the Desert. So that your Reverence shall do well to keep your self in this way, till you meet with some other, who may have more experience, than I ; and may know it better. Only, if they be persons who were but beginning to have gust in God, do not believe them ; for they conceive, that they profit themselves more, and have more gust, when they help themselves in such sort as is declared before. O, how God comes clearly, and openly without these little helps when he pleaseth ! So that, whether we will or no, he elevates, and hurries-away the Spirit, as some Gyant would take up a straw ; and, no resistance is sufficient. But what an impertinency is it, for a man to believe, that, whensoever

he

he lists, a Toad should be made able to fly upward of it self? And I hold it to be a more difficult, and absurd thing than this, for our Spirit to be able to exalt it self without being raised by God; for, it is, all laden with earth, and with a thousand impediments; and it will prove of little use to it, that it hath a mind to fly; for, though flying be more natural to a Soul, than to a Toad, yet this Soul is now so plunged in dirt and mire, that she hath lost this quality by her own fault.

I will therefore conclude with this; that whensoever we dispose ourselves, to think, and meditate upon Christ our Lord, we remember the love wherewith he did us so many Favours, and how greatly God was pleased to shew it to us, by giving us so high a pledg, and pawne of his love; for, one love begets, and breeds another. And though we should be meer beginners in this holy exercise, and should withal be very wicked, yet let us still procure to be looking upon this object, and still be stirring our selves up to love. For, if once our Lord vouchsafe to imprint this love in our hearts, all things will grow easie to us, and we shall work very readily, and without any trouble. His Divine Majesty vouchsafe to bestow it upon us (since he knowes how very much the same imports us) for the great love, which he bare to us, and for the sake of his Glorious Son, who also loved us so much to his cost.
Amen.

One thing I would fain ask your Reverence; how our Lord, beginning to do Favors to a Soul, and those so eminent, as to bring her to perfect Contemplation; which Soul were therefore, in all reason, to remaine entirely perfect even at that instant, (for certainly it ought to be so; since whosoever receives so very great blessings from Heaven, should be extremly far from caring for any such delights, as concerns this life) and when she growes also to have Raps, and so to receive more Favours, and higher Effects thereof, and these so much the more, as she falleth out to be more untied from the world; and considering withall, that in the very first instant, when our Lord arrives to a Soul, he can leave her entirely sanctified; how, I say, our Lord rather compleats, this Soul afterward, in some processe of time, with perfection in vertue. This I say, would I very fain know, for I understand it not yet; though I know well, that it is a very different case, in the proportion of strength, God leaves in a Soul, when his visitation, at the first, lasts no longer than the opening, as it were, and shutting of an eye; and is scarce felt at all, but only by the effects, which it leaves behind it, & when on the other side, this Favour continues to be of much longer extent. And it occurs to me often, to doubt, whether the cause of this may not be, that the Soul dis-

poses

poses not her self intirely for God, till his Divine Majesty bring her up, & breed her for himself by little and little; & so make her to resolve her self all at once, and give her a manly strength, that she may cast all away, as he instantly did with *S. Mary Magdalene*. He also doth it with others, after the rate of their co-operating with him; and as they suffer his Divine Majesty to dispose of them wholly, according to his own good pleasure: But, we know not how to believe, that, even in this life, God gives us a hundred for one. I thought also of this Comparison, That supposing the thing to be all one, which is imparted both to Proficients, and Beginners, it would be like to some one only food whereof many feed all at once; and that they, who eat but little of it, retain only some little favour, or smack thereof for a while; but they, who feed more largely, it helps them to subsist; and they, who feed yet more plentifully on it, receive also vigour and strength by it; yea and a Soul may feed so often, and so fully, upon this food of life, that she may come not to endure any thing at all which shall not taste just like that. For she findes the very great benefit, which she receives by it; and she hath her taste already so wholly made to that sweetenes, that she had rather even leave to live, than to feed upon other things; which would all serve for nothing, but only to take away the good taste, which the former excellent food left in her mouth.

Besides, no conversation with holy company is wont to be of so much use, and benefit in one day, as in many; but we may be in it so long, as that we may grow to be even like them our selves; if our Lord will be pleased to do us so much favour: and in fine, the maine businesse consists, in what his Divine Majesty vouchsafes to do, and to whom he will be pleased to give it; though yet it imports very much, that whosoever begins to receive this Favour fully resolve himself to be absolutely disengaged, and untryed from the whole world, and to esteem that Favour as highly, as the thing deserves.

It also seemes to me, as if his Divine Majesty went resolving to try, who they are that love him, whether this Soul, or that; and that he discovers himself by imparting so soveraign a delight, to quicken, and fortify her Faith, if dead, in the belief of those great blessings, which he meanes to give her; saying, *Bebold this is a dropp of that vast Ocean of Benedictions*: For he omits nothing that can be done for those he loves. And, as he sees they receive it, so he gives it, and himself with it. In fine, he loves them, who love him; And O, what a good Lover, and a good Beloved, is he! O thou, the Lord of my Soul! O that I could find any fit words, whereby I might give to be understood,

what thou bestowest upon such, as trust thee ; and what they lose, who arrive to this condition , and yet will needs remain still with themselves. But do not, O thou my Lord, permit this ; since already thou dost more, than this for our sakes, in coming to so base, and wicked a lodging, as this of my heart. Blessed mayest thou be for ever, and for ever.

And now I return most humbly to beseech your Reverence, that, if you mean to impart these things which I have written concerning Prayer, they may be very spiritual persons to whom you do it. For, if they understand no more than some one way ; or if they have stayed in the mid-way ; they will never be so well able to hit right. Now, there are some, whom God carries instantly by a very sublime kind of address ; and they perhaps conceive, that so others may also profit there, and may quiet the Understanding, and not serve themselves at all of the meanes of any Corporal object ; but indeed so these will come to remain as dry as a stick. And some, who have grown to enjoy a little of Quiet Prayer, presently think that, having the one , they may also do the other : and so instead of advancing in the way of profiting their Souls, shall really disadvantage themselves, as I have said. So that, in all, there will be need both of experience, and prudence ; which I beseech our Lord, of his goodness grant to us.

C H A P. XXIII.

She returns to declare the course of her life ; and how She first began to to think of aspiring to greater perfection ; and by what meanes She did it.

I will now return to that place, where I gave over the Discourse of my Life ; for I have detained my self, perhaps, longer than I ought; yet, to the end that what follows may be the better understood. From henceforward ; this will be another new Book ; I mean, another new Life ; for, hitherto it was mine ; but the Life, which I have lived since I began to declare these things of Prayer , is that, which God lived in me, (forasmuch as I could conceive) since I hold it to be impossible otherwise, for me to have given over both such ill conditions, and actions, in so short a time. Let our Lord be everlastingly praised, for delivering me in such sort from my self.

I beginning now to free my Soul from the occasions of ill, and to give my self more to Prayer, our Lord began also to do me Favours; as one, who in all appearance desired but that I would be content to receive them. His Divine Majesty, did therefore then very ordinarily give me the *Prayer of Quiet*; and many times, that also of *Union*, which lasted a long time. But now, when in those times there had occurred great Illusions of certain women, and deceits which the Devil put upon them, I began to be afraid, as considering the delight, and sweetnes, which I felt to be so very great; yea and that many times, it was such as I could not avoyd; though yet withal, on the other side, I saw cause of very great security, that it was God; especially when I was in Prayers; and I found also, that I was much bettered by it; and had more strength. But yet, whensoever I grew to be a little diverted, I returned again to fear, whether the Devil might not have a mind, to make me conceive, it was good for me to suspend my understanding so to deprive me of the exercise of Mental Prayer; and that I might not think upon the *Passion*, nor serve my self (as I was saying) of my Understanding which seemed to me a very great inconvenience. But now, when his Divine Majesty was pleased already to give me light, that I might offend him no more; and might also know, how much I owed him for this goodness; this fear came now to increase in such sort, that it put me upon a diligent search after some persons of Spirit, with whom I might communicate my affairs; and already I had gotten notice of some. For by this time they of the Society of Jesus were come hither; to which Order (though I yet knew no one of them) I was very affectionate, upon the understanding what kind of life they led, and what Prayer they used. But I found not my self worthy enough to speake with them; nor constant, & strong enough to obey them. And this gave me yet greater feare; for, to treat with them, and be such a one as I was, represented it self to me an unhandsome thing. In these cogitations of mine did I pass some time; till now, by the strong battery which I made upon my self, and through the feares to which still I was subject, I resolved to treat with one, who was a Spiritual person; and to ask him, what kind of Prayer that was, which I used; and to desire him to give me light, if he found me to be in an error; and I resolved to use all possible diligence not to offend God; for, the want, which I found in my self, of courage, continued me still in my feares. O my dear God! and how great a deceipt, and error was this in me, to separate my self from good, that so I might grow to be good. The Devil doubtless, labours much in this, at the beginning of our aspiring to Virtue; for I could not in fine conquer

self herein. He well knows, that the meanes of doing good to a Soul consists, in that she resolve to confer in particular manner with such, as are the friends of God ; and therefore I would never set any time to resolve upon this, I expected to reform my self first, as I had also done before, when I left Prayer ; and perhaps I should never have gon through with it, for I was already declined so low in certain little things of ill costom, and consequence, (which yet I would not utterly conclude, to be ill) that I had need to be assited by some other, who might reach me out his hand to raise me up. Blessed be our Lord ; for in fine, his own was the first.

When now I saw, that my fear went so far, (for I proceeded, and increased in Prayer) I conceived, that there was either some great good, or else some excessive mischief, involved in it ; for already I understood very well that it was a Supernatural accident which befel me ; since, sometimes, I was not able to resist it ; and to obtain it also, when I would, could not possibly be done. Upon this I resolved, that there would be no remedy for me, if I procured not to have great purity of Conscience, and if I quitted not all occasions of ill ; though it were but of Venial Sins. For, if my exercise of Prayer, were of the Spirit of God, the benefit did very evidently appear ; and, if it were the Devil, yet he could do me little hurt, but rather must sit down with los, if I should procure to please God, and not offend him at all. Having resolved upon this, and ever humbly praying our Lord, that he would assist me, and taking the same course several dayes, I yet found, that my Soul had not strength enough all alone to goe through with the obtaining so great perfection, in regard of some affections, I carried to certain things ; which, howsoever they were not very ill of themselves, yet served the turn to spoil all. They told me then of a certain Priest in this place, who was a learned man : and whose vertue, and good life our Lord began to discover to the world ; and I procured by meanes of a holy Cavalier dwelling in the same place, to acquaint my self with him. This Cavalier is a married man ; but yet leades a life so exemplary and virtuous, and is of so great Prayer, and Charity, that his perfection shines brightly in the eyes of all men ; and with much reason, in regard of the great good, which is grown to many Souls by his means ; as also by his so great talents, that, though he be not forwarded by a plentiful Fortune ; yet he cannot choose, but assist them other wayes. He is of great understanding, and of a sweet nature. His conversation no way troublousom ; but so agreeable, and delightful, (being also just, and holy) that he pleaseth all such as treat with him. He orders all things for the

great

great good of such Souls, as he converses with ; and seem es indeed to have no other endeavour, or aim, than to do good to all them, whom he findes any way capable thereof ; and to give contentment to all. Now, this holy, and blessed man do I esteem to have by his industry laid the foundation for the salvation of my Soul. I am confounded to think of his humility, in that he would be content to see me ; for there were, as I conceive, little less than forty yeares wherein he had exercised Mental Prayer (they might perhaps be fewer by two, or three years,) and he led his life, with all that perfection, which his condition and state seemed to permit. He hath a Wife, who is so great a Servant of God, and a woman so full of charity, that he loses nothing at all by possessing her. In a word, God chose for him a Wife, whom he knew to be fit for so great a Servant of his : some of his kindred were married to some kins-women of mine. And besides I was also acquainted with another great Servant of God who was married to one of my Cosen-Germans ; and I had much acquaintance there ; and by this meanes I procured that the Priest, who was his great friend, and withal so great a Servant of God, might come and speak with me ; for I intended to Confess my self to him ; and to have him for my Directour. And now, that Cavalier conducting him to me, that we might speak together, and I remaining with extream confusion to see my self in the presence of so holy a man, gave him some knowledg of my Soul , and of the Prayer which I used ; for he excused himself from taking my confession, telling me, that he was very full of businesse ; and so indeed he was. He began with a holy resolution to conduct me, as a person who was confirmed , and stroag (for indeed I was to have been so in all reason, according to the Prayer, which he saw, I held) that I should no more offend God in the least degree. But when I found his resolution so strict concerning those little things, from which , as I said, I had not the courage to depart instantly with so great perfection, I was much afflicted ; and when I found, that he meant to carry the busines of my Soul after such manner, as if he would make an end, thereof, as it were, all at once, I saw, that I had need of much more consideration , and art to effect this. In a word, I was of opinion, that the meanes, which he prescribed, were not such, whereby my remedy was to be procured ; for, they were proper for a Soul more perfect, than mine. As for me, though I had proceeded very far (in as much as might concern the Favours of God to my Soul) yet, for what concerned Vertue, and Mortification, I was but in the very beginnings thereof. And certainly, I conceive, that if I had not been to treat with any other than him, my Soul would never

have improved , and thriven. For , through the affliction , which gave me to see , how I did not , yea and how (as I thought) I could n do , that , which he prescribed , it was enough to make me lose my hope , and to give over all. Sometimes I marvaile , that God was not pleased to let this Servant of his , the holy Priest , receive a perfect knowldg of my Soul ; nor charge him with the care thereof ; since he is a person , who hath a particular facility , and grace , in attracting , or beginning to gain Souls to his Divine Majesty . But I see , that all this hapned for my greater good , that so I might come to know , and converse with so holy men , as they of the *Society of J esus* .

In the mean time , I agreed with that Cavalier , of whom I spake , that now and then he should visit me ; and here I discerned his great humilit y ; since he would be contented to converse with one so wicked , as my self . He began therefore then to visit me , and to encourage me , and tell me , that I must not think to deliver my self from all my imperf ections in one day ; but that by little and little God would do it ; and that himself had remained some whole years in reforming some very little light things , as not being able to finish the work sooner . O Humility ! how great blessings doth thou bestow upon them , with whom thou remainest ? yea and even upon those others also , who do but approach to the possessours thereof . This Saint (for , in my opinion , I may give him this name with great reason) related certain particulars to me concerning himself , which , through his humility , seemed weaknesses to him ; but he did it for my remedy , and redres s ; and , considering his condition of life , they importred neither fault , nor imperfection ; but , as for mine , it was a very great one to be subject to them . Nor do I say this beside the purpose , though perhaps I may seem to extend my self too far in speaking of these little things ; but they import so much , for bringing a Soul , into the way of profiting in Spirit , and for causing her to flye , which hath scarce yet gotten any feathers , that none , who hath not experience of it , will believe it . And , because I hope in God , that your Reverence may receive some benefit by it , I say this here ; that , all my help consisted in this mans finding out the right way to cure mes ; and in his exercising such Humility , and Charity in hearing me ; yea and patience also , in perceiving that I did not instantly and entirely amend my self . This man went with discretion by little , and little ; and shewed me wayes to overcome the Devil . In the mean time I began to carry so entire an affection to him , that I could not receive a greater ease , and joy , than that day , when I might see him ; though they were but few . When he delayed his Visits , I was very much troubled ; as doubting , that he for bore

bore to see me, because I was so wicked. When he came to know my so great imperfections (and they might be Sins; though yet, after I had begun to treat with him, I was somewhat amended) and when I informed him also of the Favours which God had been pleased to do me, that he thereby might give me some light, he told me, that all those things did not suit very well with one another; and that those Regalo's were belonged to persons, who were already very much improved, and mortified; That, for his part, he could not forbear to be much afraid, because it seemed to him, that there appeared an evil Spirit in some things, though yet he would not absolutely resolve it; but he wished, that I should consider very well whatsoever I could understand, concerning my Prayer, and so relate it to him. Now here the great trouble was, that I could tell him nothing at all what my Prayer was; for indeed it is not long, since God hath done me the Favour of knowing either how to understand it, or declare it.

As soon as he had thus expressed himself to me, the affliction, I had, was great; and the tears, I shed, were many, through the fear I had. For certainly, I desired to please God, and I knew not how to persuade my self, that it was of the Devil; only I feared, left, for my great sins, our Lord might blind me so far, as that I could not understand it. Turning over some Books, to see if I could meet with any thing concerning my Prayer, I found in one, which is called, *The Ascent of the Mountain*, (in that particular, which concernes the Union of a Soul with God) all those signes which I had in it; my not being able to think of any thing; for, this was that, of which I spake most; that, Namely, I could not think of any thing, when I had that Prayer; and I marked, and noted those places with certain lines; and then I delivered him the Book, to the end that both himself, and that holy Priest and Servant of God, of whom I spake before, might consider it, and make me know, what I was to do; and whether perhaps they might be of opinion, that I was to give over my Prayer altogether. For, in fine, to what purpose, was I to thrust my self into those dangers, if now (after I had used this Prayer for almost twenty years together) I had made no benefit thereof, but only the deceipts of the Devil; and that therefore it were better for me, not to use this Prayer at all; though this seemed also a hard case to me, since already I had found by experience, how ill it went with my Soul to be without the exercise of Prayer. So that now I could see nothing but misery on all sides; like one, who were cast into a River, who which way soever he turns, still fears more danger; and so stands on the very point as it were of drowning.

This

This is a very grievous affliction ; and of this kind I have endured many ; as I shall declare afterward : For though, perhaps, it may seem, not to import much, yet peradventure, it may prove of use, towards the understanding how a Spirit is to be tryed. For certainly, the affliction endured in these cases is excessive , and there is need of much care and prudence ; especially, when treating with women ; for, our weaknes is very great ; and much mischief may come by telling them plainly , that such or such a thing is certainly the Devil , without considering it first very well , and removing them from those dangers which may occur ; and advising them to keep things very private ; and we also ought to be careful thereof our selves ; for this is fit. And herein, I speak, as one , who have endured affliction enough for that those persons with whom I conferred, about my Prayer, did not conceal it ; but by consulting one with another for my good, have done me much hurt. For now, diverse things have grown to be publique, which might well have remained very private, since they are not for all ; and besides , it may seem , as if they had been divulged by me. I will believe, that, without any fault in them, our Lord was pleased to permit it, to the end I might suffer by it. I am far from saying, any of them related what I had imparted to them in Confession ; but in regard they were persons, to whom I gave account of my fears to the end, they might assist me , with giving me some light , me thinks , they might have kept my counsel : Howsoever , I durst never conceal any thing from such persons. I say therefore, that such, as I was then, must be counsellel with much discretion, and animated ; and time must be expected ; for our Lord will help them , as he did me ; which if he had not done, the harme, which I should have sustained , would have been extream, by reason of my being so full of apprehensions, and fears; and especially, confidering the great palpitations of heart , I was subject to, I wonder, how this other accident did me no more hurt.

When therefore I had delivered this Book , and made a relation of my Life, and of my Sins, the best I could, (though yet in grosse ; for I did it not, in the way of Confession , in regard he was a Secular person ; though yet still I made him understand , how wicked I was) those two Servants of God confidered with great charity, and love, what might be convenient for me to do. Now, the Answer being resolved on , which I expected with fear enough ; and I having recommended my self , at that time to many persons, that they might pray for me to God; and my self also having been much in Prayer, with much grief the Cavalier came to me at length, and told me, that, in both their opinions, it was the Devil ; and that the thing which would be fit for me to do , was , to treat about

about this busines, with a certain Father of the *Society of JESUS*; whom if I sent to, and declared, that I was in need of his help, he would not fail to come; and that I shoud give him an account of my whole life, by making a *General Confession*, as also otherwise of my condition; and that I must proceed, in all things, with much clearnes; and that then, in vertue of the *Sacrament of Confession*, God would give him more light, wherewith to direct me; and that they were men of great experience in matter of Spirit; but that I should do well, to be very careful not to swerve a whit from what he said; for that I remained in much danger, if I had not one to govern and direct my Soul. As for me, he put me now into so great fear, and pain, that I knew not what to do with my self; and did nothing but weep. And, being one day very much afflicted in an *Oratory*, I fell on reading a certain Book, which it seems our Lord brought to my hands; and *S. Paul* is cited there, saying, That *God is very faithfull*; and that *he never suffers them, who love him, to be tempted above their strength, or deluded by the Devil*. This comforted me very much; and I began to consider about making my *General Confession*; and to put in writing all the bad and good things in the course of my whole life, the most clearly, that I understood, and knew how to do; without leaving out the mention of any little thing. And I remember, that, when I read over what I had written, and saw so many ill things committed by me; and no good done; it gave me an extream affliction, and sorrow. It also put me to some trouble, that they of the House should see me treat, and converse with so holy people, as they of the *Society of JESUS* are; for I was afraid of mine own wickednes; and me thought, I shoud be more obliged, by this to be so wicked no more, and to give over my entertainments & pass-times; and that, if I did not this, it would be worse with me; So that I procured both with the *Sacrifician* and *Porteresse*, that they shoud not speak to any thereof. But this availed me little; for there chanced to be one at the Gate, when I was called, who published it over all the Convent.

But now, what difficulties, and troubles, and fears doth the Devil provide for such perlons, as dispose themselves to approach to God? When I was treating with that Servant of his Divine Majesty (who was greatly so, and a very discreet person too) about the passages of my whole life, and of my Soul, he declared to me what every thing was; as a man, who understood that language very well? and he encouraged me much; and told me, that it was evidently the Spirit of God, which wrought in me; But that I must return again to the exercise of Prayer, because I was not well grounded, nor had begun to understand Mortification; (and this

was very true ; for *I* hardly understood so much as the name) that *I* should by no means give over my Prayer, but rather much animate and enforce my self thereto ; since God had done me so particular Favours ; and who knew, whether it might please our Lord , to do good to many by my meanes ; and other things also he said, (so that he might seem to have prophesied then concerning those things, which our Lord was pleased since to effect with me,) That *I* should be very much to blame, if *I* corresponded not with those Favours, which our Lord vouchsafed to shew me. In all things, it seemed to me, that the Holy Ghost spake to *me*, by this Father, in order to the Cure of my Soul ; so distinctly was every thing imprinted therein. He put me to great confusion ; and directed me by such means to proceed, that he seemed to make me quite another Creature. O what a great thing it is, to understand a Soul ! He willed me every day to meditate upon some passage of the Passion , and that *I* should help my self thereby ; and that *I* should not think, but upon his Holy Humanity ; and that *I* should resit those recollections, and gusts, as much as *I* could ; and not give place to them, till he should express himself to *me* by some other order.

He left me both comforted, and strengthned ; and our Lord assisted both *me*, and him, to the end , that he might understand my condition , and in what sort I was to govern my self ; and *I*, remained with a resolution not to swerve at all , from any thing which he should command me ; and therein have I continued till this very day. Our Lord be blessed and praised, for having given me grace , to obey my Ghostly Fathers, though yet after an imperfect manner ; and they have almost ever been these blessed men of the Society of Jesus ; although (as *I* said) *I* have followed them after an imperfect manner. And now my Soul began to receive an evident improvement ; as *I* will here declare.

CHAP. XXIV.

She prosecutes the former Discourse ; and shows, how her Soul went profiting, when once she had begun to obey : and how little it availed her, to resist the Favours of God ; and how his Majesty went daily imparting them to her after a more compleat manner.

MY Soul remained so tractable by this last Confession of mine, that I thought, there could be nothing, to which I would not dispose my self; and so I instantly began to make a change in many things, though yet my Ghostly Father did not urge me, but rather seemed to make little account of all. And this wrought even so much the more upon me; for he carried me on rather by the way of loving God, and as one that allowed liberty ; and did not press much, unless I voluntarily offered my self out of Love. Thus I continued almost two moneths, using all the diligence, that possibly I could, to resist the Regalo's, and Favours of God. As for my exterior conversation and proceeding, there was an apparent change to be seen in me ; for already our Lord began to give me courage to do certain things, which the persons, who saw and knew me, held to be extremal ; and even in the House it self, and indeed in respect of what I was wont to do before they might be accounted so ; though yet still all fell short of that, to which I was obliged both by the Habit I had taken, and by the Profession I had made. From that resisting the gufts, and Regalo's of God, I gained thus much, that his Divine Majesty became my Instructour therein : For before, it seemed to me that for the disposing my self towards the receiving of any such Regalo's as those, there was need to retire, and shut my self up into corners ; and I also durst not, as it were, move or stir. But afterward I quickly found how little all that served to the purpose ; for, when I procured to divert my self most, our Lord most overwhelmed me, & covered me all over with that Suavity, and glory, as seemed even to compass me in on every side ; in such sort, as was not possible for me to scape from it. And really so it was ; I took so much care to decline it ; that it did even put me to pain ; and our Lord still took more care to do me Favours ; and to express himself, that way (in those two moneths) much more than he had formerly done ; to the end that I might the better know, that it was now no longer in my power to resist.

And now I began a new to carry a great love towards the most Sacred Humanity of our Lord ; and my Prayer began to settle it self, like a well-founded Building ; and I began also to be more inclined to the doing of Pennance, wherein I was slack before, by reason of my so great infirmities. For, that holy man to whom I made my Confession told me, that some kinds of Pennance, which he named, would do me no hurt; and that perhaps God gave me so much sickness, because I did no penance ; and therefore his Majesty would impose some. He willed me also to do certain acts of Mortification, which were not very pleasing to me ; I went through with them all ; because it seemed to me as if our Lord himself had commanded them ; and his Divine Majesty, gave him also grace to enjoyn them in such sort, as that I should obey him. My Soul went then greatly sensible of every offence, which I might commit against God, how light or small soever the same might be ; in such sort, that, if I did but wear any superfluous thing about me, I was not able to recollect my self, till I had put it off. I made much Prayer to our Lord, that he would be pleased to protect me still ; and that, since I conversed, and treated with his Servants, he would never permit me to return back again ; for I conceived, that would be a grievous offence in me ; and that they would lose credit by my means.

At this time came to this place Father *Francis Borgia*, who had been Duke of *Gandia*, and who some yers before had left all, and entred into the Society of *Jesus*. My Ghostly Father, and the Cavalier, of whom I spoke before, procured him to come to me, that I might speak with him, and also give him an account of the Prayer I held ; knowing, that the said Father was a person far advanced, and much favoured, and regaled by God ; as one, who had left much for him ; & therefore he rewarded him for it even here in this life. When he had heard me, he told me, it was the Spirit of God ; and that he was of opinion, that now it was fit no longer to resist it ; though yet, till then, he thought it to have been well done. But that I should always begin my Prayer with some paffage of the Pallion ; and if afterward our Lord would elevate my Spirit, I should not resist him, but suffer his Divine Majesty to exalt it; provided, that my self should not have any hand in procuring it. He, as being a man who had travailed far in that way, gave me both Physick and Council. For, experience is a great matter in these affairs ; and he said, it was an error, to resist so any longer. I remained greatly comforted by this ; and Cavalier also ; and he rejoiced much to hear him say, that it was of God ; and he always advised, and assisted me in what he could ; which was very much.

About.

About this time, they removed my Ghostly Father from that place to another ; which I resented extreamly ; for I thought , I should turn wicked again ; and I conceived it not possible to find another like him. My Soul remained as it were in a Desert, full of discomforts, and fears ; nor did I know what to do with my self. A certain Kinswoman of mine, procured to carry me along with her to her House ; and I procured also to go the rather, that so I might get another *Confessor of the Society of Jesus*. Our Lord was also pleased then, that I should make friendship with a certain Lady, a Widdow, who was both of great quality, and Prayer , and conversed much with the Fathers of the said *Society* ; she brought me also to Confess to her *Confessor* : and I remained a good while , in her house ; for she lived near ; and I was glad , to treat much with those Fathers ; for, by the only understanding the sanctity of their conversation, the profit which my Soul found was great. This Father began to engage me upon ways of more Perfection. He told me, that, for the entire contenting & pleasing God, there was nothing to be left undone : But this he said with a great deal of prudence, and sweetnes ; for my Soul was not yet any whit strong, but very green, and tender ; especially in the quitting certain friendships, which I maintained at that time ; for though I offended not God thereby , yet the affection which I bare them was great ; and I held it to be a kind of ingratitude to give them over. And so I also told him , that since God was not offended by it , why should I be ungrateful ? He said , I should do well, to recommend it to God for some days , and to recite the *Hymn of Venis Creator Spiritus*, that He might give me light to do what was best. Having therefore been much in Prayer, and humbly beseeching our Lord, that he would assist me to please him in all things, I began the *Hymn* ; and whilst I was saying it, there came a Rapt upon me, so sudden, that it took me, as it were, out of my self ; and of this I could not doubt ; for it was very evident ; and it was the very first time, that our Lord did me the Favour of Raps ; and I heard these words : *I will not have thee hold conversation with men, but with Angels*. This gave me a great amazement ; for the commotion of the Soul was great ; and those words were spoken to me in the very interiour part of the Spirit ; so they made me afraid ; though yet, on the other side, they gave me also great consolation, which upon the flight of that fear ,) which in my opinion, that strang novelty had caused did still remain with me. This Speech of our Lord hath been very well accomplished ; for, never have I been able any more to establish friendship at all, or to find consolation, or entertain particular love towards any, save such, as

I understand to love God, and to endeavour to serve him. Nor is it now any longer in my power, nor serves a whit to the purpose, whether any of them be kindred, or friends ; or no ; If I understand not, that he is the Servant of God, or a person addicted to Prayer, it is a heavy cross to me to converse with any one. And this is certainly true, to the uttermost of what I can judge of my self.

From that day forward I have remained full of courage, and resolution to leave all for God ; as though he had been pleased in that very moment (for it seemed to me) no more to make this his handmaide become wholly another Creature. So that now there was no longer need that they should command me in that particular any more ; for, when my Ghostly Father, Father saw me so fixed upon that custome, he had not as yet adventured to will me exprely to do it. For he did without all doubt expect, that our Lord should do it himself, as indeed he did ; nor yet could I ever imagine, that it would take such effect ; because already I had used some endeavours that way ; & the affliction it caused me was so great, that I gave it over, as being a thing, which I held not inconvenient. But now here, our Lord imparted both liberty, and strength to me to put it in execution. So I told this to my Ghostly Father ; and I gave over that Friendship according to what I had been directed. And it did them no little good, with whom I conversed, to see this resolution me. God be ever blessed, and praised, who gave me that liberty, and power in one moment, which I had not been able to purchase, and obtain of my self by all those great diligences, which I had used many years to this end ; though I oft used so much violence, as cost me a good part of my health. But now, this having been wrought, and granted by him who is the Omnipotent, and true Lord of all, it put me not to the least paine, or trouble.

CHAP. XXV.

She treats here of the way, and manner of understanding those Words, or Speeches, which God is pleased to utter to the Soul, without hearing any voice, or sound; and of some errours or abuses, which may happen herein; and how the right may be known from the wrong.

ME thinks, it should do well to declare, how this Speech is, which our Lord expresses to the Soul; and what she feels; to the end your Reverence may understand it; for, from this time, when our Lord did me this Favour, (as I have said) the same thing is very usual with me, till this present; as I shall let you see by that which follows. I say therefore, that they are certain Words very distinctly formed; and that, howsoever they be not heard with corporal ears, yet are they understood much more exprestly, and clearly, than if they were so heard. And to forbear to understand them, (how much resistance foever there may be) is a vanity, and an impossible thing. When, in this world, we have a mind not to hear, we may stop our ears, or else attend to other things, if we will; in such sort, that, although we may hear the words, yet we shall not understand them. But now, in this discourse which God makes to the Soul, there is no remedy at all, but it makes me hearken to it, whether I will, or no; and obligeth the understanding to be so entire and attentive, for the comprehending of that which God will have us understand, that our willingness or unwillingness avails nothing. For he, who can do all things, is resolved, we shall understand, that what he wills must be done; and so he comes to be known to be the true Lord of us all. I have very well experimented this truth, for, the resistance, which I made, did last upon the point two years, through the great fear, wherein I was; yea and even now I make those tryals sometimes, but it serves me to little purpose. I would faine declare the errours, and abuses, which may here occur; (though, for one who hath much experience, me thinks there should be few, or none; But indeed the experience should be much) and how to know the difference, when it is a good Spirit; and when a bad; or how it may also be but an apprehension of the Understanding it self, which may happen; or that the Spirit speaks to it self; I know not very well, whether this may happen, or no; though this very day, I had an opinion, that it might. When these Words are of God, I find
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the truth thereof in many things ; which have been told me two or three years before ; and they all have proved true ; and to this present not any one of them hath failed. There are also other things , whereby is proved very plain, that it is the Spirit of God ; as I will declare afterward.

To me it seems , that a person recommending a thing to God with great earnestnes , and apprehension , may make himself conceive , that he understands in some sort, whether the thing shall be , or no ; and this is very possible ; but he , who understands things after this other manner , will clearly discover , what shall be ; there is so great a difference. And if it be a thing , which the Understanding devises , (how subtilly , and delicately soever the matter goe) it understands , that such things is ordained , and said by it. For , these are no other thing , than if one framed a Discourse himself ; or else harkened to what another says to him ; for then the Understanding finds that it doth not harken , because it works ; and the words , which it frames in that case , are , as it were , a deaf man's , fantastical , and not delivered with that clearnes as these others are . And here it is in our own power to divert our selves , as to hold our peace , when we speak ; but in this other case we have no such power at all .

Another sign there is , of more importance than all the rest ; for , these things , which are said by our selves , work no effect at all ; But the other , when our Lord is pleased to speak , is not only words , but works ; and , though they be not words of devotion , but of reprobation , they instantly dispose the Soul , and enable her , and make her relent ; and give light to , and regale , and appease her . And , if she were in state of dryness , and disquiet , and disorder , these Words take all away , as if it were with the hand ; yea and much better than so ; for it seems that our Lord's busines is then to shew his mighty power ; and that his VVords are deeds . Me thinks , there is such a difference , as there is between our speaking , or our hearing ; For , that which I speak , I go ordering (as I was saying) with my Understanding ; but , if another speak to me , I do no more than hear , without any trouble at all to my self . One of these is like some thing whereof we cannot well determine , whether it be not , as of one , who is half asleep . But this other is a voice so distinct , and clear , that not one single syllable of all that is said can be lost . And yet , these things happen sometimes when the understanding , and indeed the whole Soul is in so great distraction , and disorder , that it would never be able to hit right , in its framing one little piece of good discourse ; but she finds in this other way certain well-ordered , great , and weighty sen-

sentences which are imparted to her, that, though she were never so deeply recollect, she were not able to reach them; and at the very first word thereof (as I was saying) they make a total mutation of her. And especially, if she be in a Rapt, when the Powers of the Soul are suspended, how shall those things come to be understood by her, which never came before into her Memory; as they come then, when it works not in effect at all; and when the Imagination is now, upon the matter, as it were, stupified.

But here it is to be understood, that, whensoever either Visions are seen, or any of these Supernatural Words heard, it is never, in my opinion, at such times, when the Soul is wholly united in the Rapt it self; for, at those times (as, I think, I declared already, in my Discourse of the *Second Water*) all the Powers of the Mind are entirely lost; and so we cannot (at such times, as those) either see, or understand, or hear. For, the Soul is wholly in the power of another at that time, which yet uses to last very little; and, me thinks, our Lord leaves her in liberty, for no thing at all. But, when that short time is past, the Soul remaining still in the Rapt, this happens whereof now I speak; because the Powers remain in such sort at that time, that though they be not lost, yet in effect they operate, and act nothing at all; but are as if they were absent, and no way able to discourse, by composing of reasons. There are so many wayes to understand the difference between the true, and false, that if the Soul should chance to be deceived once, she would not be so very often. And I say further, that, if the Soul have had any experience, and be careful to observe what passes, she will evidently discern this truth. For, besides all other means, whereby that will appear, which I have said, these strained words will work no effect at all; neither will the Soul, ever admit them; (as yet she must these other true ones, whether she will, or no.) Nor gives she any credit to them, but rather knows, that it is but an idle imagination; just so as we would not make account of one whom we know to be frantick.

But this other is, as if we heard some person speak, who were very holy or learned, and of great authority; and such an one, as we are sure, would not lye. And this is but a mean Comparison; because indeed these Words do carry with them sometimes so great a Majesty, that even (without so much as reflecting upon, who speaks them) if they be words of reprehension, they make us tremble; and, if they concern the Love of God, they make Souls even dissolve, and as it were annihilate themselves in love. And they are things, which (as I have said already) are very far, then, from our remembrance; and so high and so great sentences

tences are so fuddainly pronounced, as that there would have been need, of a very great deal of time for our selves to contrive them ; and I think it impossible then to be ignorant, that such things as these, could never be framed by our selves. So that there is no cause to detain my self herein any longer ; for it would look like a wonder in mine eye , if any experienced person should be deceived herein , unless he had a mind to deceive himself.

It hath hapned to me very often , if I be in any doubt , not to believe that, which *these words* here told me , but to conceive , that it was mine own fancy : (But this I do , when the thing is past ; for at that present it is impossible), and then to have seen them fulfilled long after ; because our Lord is pleased , that the same should so remain still in the memory , as that it is not possible to forget it. Now that , which is wont to proceed from our own understanding is but the first motion of our thoughts , which quickly passes away , and is forgotten ; whereas this other , is a *Work* , rather than a *Word*. And though some part may be forgotten in tract of time , yet the Memory cannot lose it so far , as not to know , such thing was said , unless the time have been very long ; or else they be *Words of Favour* , or of *Instruction* ; but , if they be of *Prophecy* , they never happen , in my opinion , to be forgotten ; at least this never hapned to me , though yet I have a very ill memory .

And now I return to say , that , me thinks , if a Soul be not , so degenerate , as that it would counterfeit , and feigne (which were very faulty) and would say , that she understands things , when yet really there is no such matter , it is impossible but that she should see clearly , that it is she her self who composes , and frames those Words , and speaks them to her self ; especially if she have experienced at all the Spirit of God ; for , if she have not , she may very well remain in this error , all the days of her life ; and may perhaps conceive , that she understands those Words , as spoken by some other ; though I know not , how . For , either this Soul would understand such words , or not . If she be afflicted , for that she understands , and would fain understand no part of it , (for a thousand fears , besides many other reas ons , which she may have , desiring to continue quiet in her Prayer without such accidents , as these) how comes she to allow so much time to the Understanding , as may serve for the composing of these reasons ? For there must be a good time for that . But now , in this other way , we remain instructed , without any los s of time at all ; yea we understand certain things at an instant ; when otherwise a maneth would have been time little enough , to have our selves contriv'd them . Yea and the Understanding remains amazed at some things ,

things, which we understand. This is the very truth; and whosoever hath any experience, will find every word of this which I have said most certain; and I bleſs God for enabling me to declare it, as I have done. And now I end this part of the Discourse, with saying, that me-thinks, when such Words proceed from our own Understanding, we may easily come to know, if we have a mind to it; and every time, that we are in Prayer, we may fanfy, that we hear them; But, in this other kind of Words, it is not so; for it will be many dayes, wherein, though I should desire to understand somewhat of that kind, it is impossible; and when, at other times, I have no desire, I must understand it; as I have said. And me thinks whosoever had a mind to deceive others, affirming himself to understand that from God, which is from himself, might as well (and it would cost him as little) affirme, that he heard it, with his corporal eares. And it is a most certain truth, that I never thought, there was any other way, than that, for the hearing, and understanding any thing, till I found it in mine own case, and it hath cost me, as I said, much trouble.

When these things proceed of the Devil, they do not only not work any good effects, but leave also very ill ones. But this, hath not hapned to me, above twice, or thrice; and I have instantly been advertised by our Lord, that they were of the Devil, besides the great drynes, which they leave behind them. There is a disquiet in the Soul, after the manner I have had it at many other times, when our Lord hath permitted me to have great temptations and troubles of Soul, in different kindes, and also that I should often be tormented, as I will declare hereafter: But this is a certain disquiet, of which we know not how to understand, from whence it comes; but it seems, that the Soul resists it, and is put into disorder by it, and afflicted, without knowing for what; in regard that the thing that is said, is not ill, but good. I am thinking whether the one Spirit doth perceive the other. The gust, and delight which this Diabolical Spirit gives is different, in my opinion, from the other, after a most evident manner. The Devil may well deceive some such person by these gusts, as neither hath, nor ever had any before from God: I call these true gusts indeed which import a sweet, strong, well-imprinted, delightful, quiet, kind of pleasure, and joy; for, as for those little devotions of the Soul, and other slight feelings, which like young flowers are shaken off, and lost, upon the least wind of persecution, I do not call them Devotions; though yet they are good beginnings, and holy motions, but no way sufficient to determine, whether the effects proceed from a good Spirit, or a bad; and therefore it will be very necessary

cessary to walk with great caution ; for, such persons , as shall not have proceeded further in Prayer, than thus far , easily deceived , if they fall out to have Visions, or Revelations. For my part, I never had of these last, till God, of his own only goodness, gave me Prayer of Union ; unless it were that first time, whereof I spoke ; this hapned to me || many years agoe , when I saw Christ ; and I would it had pleased his Divine Majesty , that I had understood at that time , that it was a true Vision , as I understood it to be afterward ; for it would have been no small advantage to me.

But now, upon these illusions of the Devil , there never remains any sweetnes, or softnes, and supplenels in the Soul ; but she is, as it were, frighted, and with much disgust. And I hold it for certain , that God will never permit the Devil to deceive any Soul, which puts no confidence at all in her self, and is fortified in the Faith , and resolves thus much for her part , to dye a thousand deaths for the least Article thereof ; and who, with this Love to the Faith , which is infused instantly into the Soul by God , and is a Lively , and strong Faith , procures always to goe in conformity to that , which is held by the Church ; informing her self further concerning it, from several persons, one or other , as one who is strongly settled in these truths ; so that all the imaginable Revelations in the world, no not , if she should see the very Heavens open themselves , could make her vary in the least point from the Doctrine of the Church. But, if she once come to shake, or waver even in a thought, against this ; or entertain her self so far, as to say : *If God saith this to me , this may also be true, as well as that which he hath said heretofore to some Saints;* I say not, if she believe it, but the Devil doth begin to tempt her by this motion ; and that she be content to continue her self a little therein ; one may see already , that this is sterke naught. But for my part, I believe, that many times even these other first motions will hardly set upon such a Soul; if she be already so strong , as our Blessed Lord is wont to make such to whom he imparts these Favours. For , she thinks , she could tear those Devils to pieces for any one little Truth, which the Church holds. I say, that, if the Soul do not find such a strength, as this, in her self, and that the devotion, or Vision, which she had, doth not assist, and help her on therein, let her not hold any such Vision for safe ; because , though the hurt of it be not instantly understood , it may perhaps grow by little and little to be great. For, (to the uttermost of what I do discern, and know by experiance) the credit, that such a thing is of the Spirit of God, is assured in such sort , that it doe conform to Holy Scripture ; And when it shall be found to vary from this Rule , though never so little , I think

think I should be then much more sure without comparison, that it were of the Devil, than now I have, that it is of God; how great soever I might find this assurance to be. For, in that case, we should have no need at all, to go in search after signes; nor to enquire, of what Spirit it were; since this is so clear a signe, to make us believe, that it is of the Devil, that, if all the world should endeavour to assure me, that it were of God, I would not believe it.

The matter is, that, when it is of the Devil, it seems, as if all good did hide it self, and flye from the Soul; so disgusted, and unquiet, and in so great disorder, doth she remain, without any one good effect at all. For, though there may be a seeming, as if there were a planting of good desires in her; yet they are not effective, or strong. The humility, which he leaves is false, unquiet, and without any suavity; me thinks, this may be easie enough understood, by any who hath experience of the good Spirit. But yet the Devil is able to play many tricks; and therefore there is nothing of this kind so certain, but that it is more secure still to fear; and to proceed with caution; and to have a Directour, who may be learned; and to conceal nothing from him; and so the Party shall be sure to take no hurt; though yet I have had my part thereof, through these excessive fears, to which some persons are subject.

In particular, it hapned to me once, that many persons meeting together, to whom I gave great credit, and there was reason, that I should do so; (for, though I proceeded herein after the manner of entire confidence but with one; yet, when he commanded me, I spoke also with others; they treated much among themselves about finding some remedy for me; For, they loved me very much; and doubted, that I might be deceived; and I was also subject to extream fears, whensoever I was not in Prayer; for, when I was in it, and when our Lord vouchsafed to do me any Favour therein, I grew presently into good assurance;) I think, they were five, or six of them; and all great Servants of God; and my Ghostly Father told me, that they all resolvled that it was the Devil; and directed me not to Communicate so often; and that I should endeavour to divert my self in such sort, as not to be much alone. I was extreamly timorous in these cases, as I have said; and the palpitation of my heart helped me on therein; so that I had not the courage many times to be alone in my roome, even by day. When I found, what so many of them affirmed, and that yet I could by no means believe it, I grew extream scrupulous, as conceiving this was want of humility, since they all were incomparably of better life, than I; and, besides, learned; and,

why should not I believe them? I forced my self the best I could to do it; and I thought much of mine own wicked life; and how, (considering that) it might be true enough, which they said. I went out of the Church with this affliction; and entred into an Oratory, having now forborne many days to Communicate, and avoided also being alone, which had been my total comfort; and without having one person with whom I might treat; for, they were all against me: Some of them, me thought, made themselves merry with me; whensoever I spake of it, as though I doated; others advised my Ghostly Father to take heed of me; others said, it was clearly the Devil. Only my Ghostly Father, though he conformed himself with those others (as I understood afterward) so far, as to make some tryal of me, did ever give me comfort, and told me, that, though it should be the Devil, yet I not offending God, he would be able to do me no hurt; That at length this would leave me; That in the mean time I should pray heartily to God; and he, and all his penitents, and many more also did the like; and all my Prayer, and theirs, whom I conceived to be the Servants of God, aymed at this; That his Divine Majesty would be pleased to carry me on by some other way. And this lasted about some two years, as I think, who continually begged the same of God.

As for me, I was capable of no comfort, when I thought once, that it was possible for the Devil to be so often speaking to me; but, in regard that now I employed no more hours of my time in Solitude, for Prayer our Lord gave me Recollection, even when I was in conversation; and so, as that I was not able to avoyd it; and he said such things to me, as he pleased; and I in the mean time was troubled, that I must hear him. But once being all alone, without having any by me, with whom to ease my self, I could neither pray, nor read; but was like a person all amazed from so great tribulation, as I endured; and so much fear, whether the Devil were to have power to circumvent me in this manner; being all disordered, and even tyred, without knowing what to do with my self (I have seen my self, in such affliction, and that very often, yet never, to my thinking, in so great extreamity, as then) I remained four, or five hours after this manner? For there seemed to be no comfort at all for me, either upon earth, or yet from Heaven; but our Lord left me so in sufferance, and under the fear also of a thousand dangers.

O my Lord! and how art thou a true friend? and how powerful! what thou wilt thou canst, and dost never leave to love them, who love thee. Let all things praise thee, O thou Lord of the world; and O, that

that I could cry out loud enough through that world, to declare, how faithful thou art to thy friends ! All other things fail us ; but thou, who art the Lord of them all, dost never fail ; and it is little also, which thou permittest such as love thee to suffer for thee. O my dear Lord ! how delicately, and smoothly, and how favourily also, dost thou know how to treat such Souls ! O that one had been so happy, as never to have detained her self, upon loving any other thing, than thee ! It seemes indeed, O Lord, that somtimes thou tryest such as love thee with a kind of rigour ; that, by that extremity of trouble, they may afterward come the better, to understand the great excess of thy love. O my God ! that I had understanding, and learning , yea and new words to be able to exaggerate thy works, according to that intelligence which my Soul hath thereof ! All this, is wanting to me, O my dear Lord ; but yet, if thou forsake me not, I will never be wanting to thee. Let all the learned men of the world rise-up against me. Let all creatures persecute me ; Let the Devils of Hell torment me ; only be not thou wanting to me O my Lord ; for I know by good experiance, with how much advantage, and fruit, thou delivereſt all ſuch persons as put their confidence in thee alone. For, when I was in this great, and miſerable affliction of Spirit, (when I had not begun to have any Vision at all) these only words, were ſufficient to quit me of all trouble, and to quiet me entirely : *Feare not, Daughter; for, it is I; and I will not forsake thee; Do not fear.* It ſeemes to me, that, conſidering what a Creature I was then, there would have been need of a long time to perfwade me to quiet my ſelf ; and that no body would have been able to do it ; and yet now, behold me here all quieted, and composed, by these few words ; and endued with strength, with courage, and with ſecurity, with a certain repofe, and light ; in ſuch ſort, as that, at that very instant, I ſaw my Soul become a direct other thing, than it was before ; and , me-thinkes , I could have disputed againſt the whole world to prove that this proceeded from God. O what a good God, O what a good Lord is he, and how powerful ! for not only doth he give the counſel, but the remedy. His Words are Works ; and O how is our faith ſtrengthened, and our Love increaſed ? It is very true ; ſo that I often called to mind how, our Lord commanded the windes to compoſe, and quiet themſelves at Sea, when a Tempeſt had riſen. And ſo alſo, did I ſay : Who is this, whom all the Powers of my Soul obey ; and who, at an iſtant, brings-in light , to chace ſo great an obſcurity away ; and makes that heart grow soft, and ſupple, which ſeemed to have the hardness of ſtone ; and knowes how to drive, and draw-down

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the water of sweet teares , where there was so great a drought so long before. Who is he , that inspires these desires ? Who imprints such a courage ? what have I been thinking on ? and what do I fear ? What is this ? I desire to serve this Lord ; and I pretend no other thing than to please him ; I renounce all contentment, and ease , or any other good at all, but only the accomplishing of his Will, (For , of this I was very sure, in my opinion ; and that I might safely affirm it) since then this Lord is so powerful, as I see he is ; and as I know, he is ; and that all the Devils of Hell are his Slaves ; and of this there can be no doubt , since it is matter of Faith ; I being a Servant of this Lord, and King, what hurt can they all do me ? and , why may not I have strength enough to fight with all the Powers of Hell ?

I then took a Cross into my hand ; and really I thought God gave me courage (for I saw my self in short time quite another) that I was not afraid, to enter into a combate with the Devils ; but conceived , that , with that Cross, I should easily overcome them all ; and I so provoked them : Now come all of you ; for I, being the Servant of our Lord, will see, what you can do against me. And it is molt certain, that I thought, they were afraid of me ; for I remained so in quiet, and so totally without fear of them all, that all the fears , which I had formerly conceived , till this present time, are removed from me. For, though I saw them (sometimes, as I shall declare afterward) yet I never feared them more, but conceived that they were rather afraid of me. I have a dominion over them , which hath been given me by the Lord of all Creatures , that I make no more reckoning of them , than of so many Flyes ; and they seem to be of so cowardly a nature, that , when once they come to find that they are not esteemed, they have no power at all. For this kind of enemy knows not how to set upon any one who renders not himself up to them ; or else , when God permits, for the greater good of his Servants , that they should tempt and torment them. I would it might please his Divine Majesty , that we would fear, whom indeed we ought to fear ; and that we might perfectly understand , that we shall receive more prejudice , by committing any one single Venial sin,than by all the power of Hell put together ; for, this is certainly so. How extreamly do these Devils carry us frighted up and down, because we indeed will needs disorder our selves, by our being so close fastened , as we are , to Honours, to Estates , and to Delights ; For then they being joyned together, with our selves, who are our own enemies, by loving, and desiring to posses that, which we ought to abhor, grow able to do us much hurt. For we enable them to fight against our very selves with our own weapons,

Pons, which we put into their hands ; when indeed we were to defend our selves thereby, against them ; this is a great shame ; But if, on the other side, we shall resolve to abhor all those things for the love of our Lord, and embrace his Cross, and pitch upon doing him service in good earnest, he flyes as fast away from these truths, as one would do from the Plague. In fine, he is a friend of Lyes ; and a very Lye himself. He is easily kept from meddling with such persons as walk according to Truth ; but, when once he discovers ones understanding obscured, he helps very readily to put out his eyes ; and if he see one already so blind, as to build his rest upon vain things, (and so vain , as that the things of this world appear no better , than toys fit for Children) he finds already that such a person is a very Child , and so he treats him like such an one : and adventures to wrestle with him, once or oftener, as he sees cause.

I beseech our Lord, I may never prove one of these , but that his Divine Majesty may be pleased to do me so much Favour , as that I may understand that to be ease, and rest, which is indeed true ease , and rest ; and that, to be honour which is true Honour ; and delight, which is true delight ; and not the direct contrary, to all this, and then a fig for all the Devils in Hell ; for they shall be afraid of me. I understand not those fears, O the Devil, the Devil ! When we may say, O God, O God. And make those Wretches to tremble. For already we know well enough, that the Devil is not able to stir , unless our Lord permit him. What then is the matter now ? It is certainly , that I am more afraid of them, who are so frighted with the Devil, then of the Devil himself ; for he is utterly unable to do me hurt, whereas these others (especially, if they be Confessors) may put Souls to much disquiet ; and I have passed some years, through so great trouble, that now I am amazed to consider, how I have been able to endure it. But Blessed be our Lord, who hath assit-ed me in so good earnest ; Amen.

CHAP. XXVI.

She prosecutes the same Discourse ; relating such things , as hapned to her, which made her lose fear ; and strengthened her belief , that it was a good Spirit, which spake to her,

I Esteem the courage , which our Lord hath vouchsafed to give me a-
gainst Devils, to be one of the great Favours which it hath pleased his

Divine Majesty to do me ; since , for a Soul to go cowardly on , and to be fearful of any thing , but only to offend God , is an extream great inconvenience . For , since we have a King who is Omnipotent , and so great a Lord , that he can do what he lists , and who brings all things into subjection under himself ; there is no cause to fear at all , walking (as I have said) sincerely , and with purity of conscience , in the presence of his Divine Majesty . And , in order to this (as I said) I shall be glad to have all the fears in the world not to offend him in any one instant of my whole life ; who is able in the very same instant to destroy , and annihilate us all . As long as his Divine Majesty is pleased with us , there is none can stand against us , without having his head broken for his pains . You will peradventure say , that this is very true ; but yet on the other side where shall we find that Soul , which stands so st freight , as to be wholly pleasing to him ? and , because she is not so , she is in fear . Not mine , for certain , which indeed is very wretched , and unprofitable , and furcharged with a thousand miseries . But God doth not proceed with such rigour , as men do ; for he knows our frailties ; and the Soul hath wayes of understanding , and finding in it self by great conjectures , whether really she love his Divine Majesty , or no ; for in such , as arrive once to this state , our love to him , is not a kind of covered , or disguised love , as in the beginnings ; but accompanied with so great impulses , and desires to see God , (as I shall hereafter declare ; or rather have declared already) that all things afflict ; all things weary , and tire ; all things torment her , unless it be with God , or for God . There is no repose , which doth not displease her ; because she finds her self absent from her true repose ; and so it is very evident , and (as I said) cannot be dissembled , or conceal'd .

It hapned to me heretofore , that I found my self in great tribulations ; and I was subject to many detractions , (by occasion of a certain busines , whereof I may have cause to speak afterward) from all that House , where I lived , yea and from my Order ; and I was afflicted upon many accidents , which then occurred ; at which time it pleased our Lord to utter these express words to me : *Of what art thou afrayd ? Dost thou not know , that I am Omnipotent ? I will accomplish all that , which I have promised thee ;* And indeed he accomplished it afterwards very well ; But even instantly there remained such a kind of strength in me , that me thought , I could presently have put my self to adventure upon other things , though they shoud cost me much more trouble , for the doing him service ; and could have suffered also much more for him . And this very thing hath hapned to me so often , that I am not able

able to count the times ; and he hath made me, and makes me still such reprebusions (by occasion of those imperfections, which I commit somtimes) that they are able as it were, to annihilate the Soul, at least, they bring with them her amendment ; for, his Divine Majesty (as I have said) doth not only give us the counsel, but the remedy. At other times, he brings back to me the memory of the Sins of my former life ; and this he most ordinarily uses to do, whensoever he intends to vouchsafe me any extraordinary Favour. And he doth it in such sort, that the Soul discerns her self, as in the very Day of the Last Universal Judgment ; and the truth is represented to her with such a kind of perspicuity, and clarity, that she knows not what to do with her self. At other times, he is pleased to inform me of certain dangers, concerning both my self and others, about things, which have not happened till three, or four years after ; but they all were ever fulfilled ; and some of them might also be named, if there were cause. So that there are so many particulars, whereby it may be understood, that these things are of God, as that, in my opinion, they cannot but be acknowledged. The most secure proceeding is, as our Lord hath also told me many times, that I doe not fail to impart my whole Soul to my Ghostly Father ; and that he be a learned man ; and that I do entirely obey him. And this is the course, which I take ; and without this, I could have no security ; nor were it indeed fit, that we women should have any ; since we have no learning ; and there can be no hurt at all in this, but many advantages.

I had once a Ghostly Father who mortified me much, and somtimes afflicted me, and brought me a great deal of trouble ; disquieting me in an extraordinary manner ; and yet it was he, who in my opinion, did me the most good. And though I loved him very much, yet I had some temptations to leave him ; for it seemed to me, that those pains which he gave me concerning my Prayer, did hinder and disturb me. But yet ever, when I was determining to do this, I instantly understood that I was to forbear it ; and I received such a reprehension from our Lord, as defeated me more, than all that, which my Ghostly Father could lay upon me. And somtimes, I was tired outright, with question on the one side, and reproof on the other ; and I had need of no less, than all this ; so double a will I had. Our Lord told me once, that it was not to obey, if withal I were not resolved to suffer ; and that I was to cast mine eyes upon what he had been content to endure for me ; and that so, all would become easie.

Once a Ghostly Father of mine, to whom I was wont to confess my self

in the beginnings, gave me this advice, that since it had been found by tryal that the Spirit was good, I should conceal things in silence; and not acquaint any therewith; for that it was better now to hush up things of this nature. As for me I misliked not this; for, every time I was to declare them to my Ghostly Father, I was so much troubled, and so shamed by it, that I had much lese difficulty somtimes to Confess my greatest Sins: especially if I were to declare those high Favours our Lord vouchsafed me, I thought, they were not likely to believe it, but to make a jest, and scorn of me. This I was chiefly troubled at, because it seemed an irreverence towards the wonders of God; and for this reason, I would have concealed them. At that time I understood, how that Ghostly Father had given me very ill advice; and that I was by no means to conceal any thing from him who heard my Confessions; because there was much security in dealing clearly with him; and that, if I proceeded otherwise, I might be deceived at one time or other. Whencever our Lord commanded me any thing in my Prayer, if my Ghostly Father bid me do otherwise, our Lord would return to command me to obey my Ghostly Father; and yet again afterward his Divine Majesty would direct him to command me to do that very thing, which our Lord himself had commanded me before.

When once they took many Books, written in *Spanish*, from me that I might not read them, I was much troubled at it; for, some of them gave me some recreation to read them; and now I was not able to read any because there were none left there but in *Latin*; our Lord said these words to me: *Be not troubled; for I will give thee a Living Book.* I could not, for my part, understand, why this was said to me; for then I had never had *Vision*; but within a little while after I understood it very well; for I had had so much to think of, and to recollect myself about, concerning those things, which I saw presented to me, and our Lord hath shewed me so great love, as to instruct me by such a multitude of wayes, that I have had very little need of Books, or rather in effect none at all; his Divine Majesty hath been that true Book to me, wherein I have indeed seen truths: And blessed be such a Book, which leaves that imprinted in the heart, which we may read there; and so, as that it can never be forgotten. Who can see our Lord all covered over with wounds, and afflicted with persecutions of all kinds, and not embrace them, and love and desire them? Who can see though but a very little of that Glory, which he gives to such as serve him, and not know that all that, which we can possibly either do or suffer here, is nothing; since we hope for so high a reward? He who sees the torments,

torments, which the damned Souls of Hell endure, how can he choose but esteem all the sufferings of this life to be delights, in comparison of those others ? and how can he choose but know the great obligation, he hath to our Lord, for having delivered him so often out of that place.

But because I mean hereafter, by the Favour of God, to speak more of some particular things of these kinds, I now intend to declare the proeefs of mine own Life ; and for the present I beseech God, that I may have well expressed my self in that which I have said already. I believe, that whosoever hath had experience will understand me ; and will see that I have hapned to say somwhat to the purpose ; but I shall not wonder if such as have none think all folly. It suffices me, to have said it, that so I may remain free from fault ; nor yet, will I blame any other for what he shall say of me. Our blessed Lord give me grace never to fail in fulfilling his holy will. *Amen.*

CHAP. XXVII.

She treats of another way, how our Lord instructs a Soul, and gives her to understand his Will, after a very admirable manner, without any speech at all. She also declares a certain Vision, and great Favour, which our Lord shewed her ; and this Vision not Imaginary.

But now, (returning to the Discourse of my Life) I remained with much affliction, and trouble, but it was accompanied with many prayers (as I was saying) which were made to our Lord, that he would be pleased to conduct my Soul by some other way which might be more secure ; since they told me, that the former was to be suspected. True it is, that, howsoever I begged it much of God, yet, though I much endeavoured to desire another way, considering how evidently my Soul was improved by the course which I held before, I could never find it in my power, unlesis it were sometimes, when I was much distressed, and tyred out, with the things which they said to me ; and the frights, into which they put me, to desire it heartily, (though yet still I asked it.) For now I was wholly grown to be another Creature ; and I could not but put my self into the hands of God, beseeching him, that since he knew what was fittest for me, he would be pleased to accomplish his holy Will in all things concerning me. I saw plainly that by this way my Soul was

carried up to Heaven, which formerly was dropping down to Hell ; Why therefore should I desire such a thing ? And, for believing, that it was of the Devil, it was not in my power to constrain my self to it ; though yet, I did what I could, to delire the one, and to believe the other ; but it was not (as I said) in my power. I offered, to this end, some little poor, good works, which I did, if I did any. I became devoted to some *Saints* ; that, by their means, I might be delivered from the Devil. I performed the Devotions of *Nine Dayes* ; I recommended my self to *S. Hilarion*, and to *S. Michael the Archangel*, for I had lately applied my self to him for this purpose ; and I importuned also many other *Saints*, that our Lord might be pleased, by their intercession, to conduct me in the way of Truth ; I say, that they would finish this busines of mine with his Divine Majesty. After the end of two years, which both I, and other persons, had employed, with all their prayers, & mine, in order to this end, that our Lord might either conduct my Soul by some other way, or declare the truth ; (for now those *Words*, and *Speeches*, which I have related, that our Lord uttered to me sometimes, were grown very ordinary, and even continual) this occured to me.

As I was in Prayer one day (and it was upon the Festivity of the Glorious *S. Peter*) I saw standing very near me, or, (to say better) me thought I felt (for indeed I saw nothing at all, with the eyes, either of my Body, or of my Mind) that Christ our Lord was close by me ; and I found, that it was he, in my opinion, who spake to me. I (who was extremely ignorant, till then, that there could be any such Vision) fell at the first into a mighty fear ; and I could do nothing but weep ; though straight, through his giving me assurance by his speaking but one only word, I found my self, as I was wont, very quiet, with Regalo, and delight, and without fear. Me-thought, that *Christ Jesus* went always by my side ; but, the *Vision* not being Imaginary, or represented in any Forme, I perceived not, in what shape he was : Though, as for his being ever on my right-side, I found, and felt that very clearly ; and that he was the witness of whatsoever I did ; and that, if I were recollect, though never so little, (or rather indeed, unles I were much diverted) I must needs understand, that he was by me. I then went immedietly to my Ghostly Father, being much grieved, that I must let him know it. He asked me, what Form, or Figure he had, when I saw him ; and I told him that I had not seen him. Upon this, he enquired, how I knew, that it was Christ. To this I answered, that I knew no more, but that I could not forbear to understand that he was close by me ; and that I found, and felt it plainly ; and that the re-

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collection of my Soul, in Prayer of Quiet, was far greater, and more continual; and that the effects were very different from those others, which I had formerly found; and that the thing was very certain, and clear. I brought divers Comparisons, whereby to give my self to be understood; but yet, in my opinion, there is none, which suits very well to exprefs this kind of Vision. For, as this is one of the highest kind (as I was told afterwards by a certain holy man, and of great Spirit, called *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, whom I shall mention afterward more at large; and the same hath been also told me by other great learned men, and that this is one of those Favours, where the Devil can least intermeddle, or intrude himself, of all others) so have we here no words, or tearms whereby to declare it; at least we, who know so little; though such as are learned, will better make it be understood. For, if I say, that I neither saw this, with the eyes of the Body, nor of the Mind (because it was no Imaginary Vision) how come I to understand, and how can I undertake, and affirme, more clearly, and certainly, that He is standing by me, than if I had seen him? For it seems indeed to me, as if a person were in the dark, who sees not another that stands by him; or as if the same person were blind. This sutes not exactly; some resemblance it carrys; though not much. For such a one knows it by the Senses; because he hears the other speak, or stir; or toucheth him; But here there is nothing of all this; nor is there perceived any darkness at all; but the thing represented to the Soul by a certain notice, which is clearer than the Sun. I say not that any Sun, or brightness is seen but only a certain light, which (without seeing any light) illuminates, and informes the Understanding, to the end that the Soul may enjoy so high a good. Now, this brings great benefits with it. Yet is it not like such a Presence of God, as many times is perceived especially by such persons, as are arrived to Union, and Quiet Prayer; who, in resolveng to begin to make that Prayer, seem to find the person ready at hand, to whom to speak; and we seem to understand that he hears us by the effects, and spiritual sentiments which we find of great Love, and Faith, and other firm purposes and resolutions accompanied with much tenderness of Devotion. This is a great Favour of God; and let him esteem it much, who hath it; for it is a very elevated, and high Prayer; but yet it is no Vision; but it is understood that God is there by the effects; which, as I have said, he works in the Soul; for, in this manner doth his Divine Majesty vouchsafe to give himself, then, and there, to be perceived. But now, here, it is clearly discerned that *Jesus Christ* the Son of the *Virgin* is present. In that other manner of Prayer there are certain influences of

of the Divinity represented ; but here, together with them, we find that the most Sacred Humanity also doth accompany us to do us favours. My Ghostly Father then asked me this question : *Who told you, that it was Jesus Christ ?* Himself told me so, (answered I) and that many times ; but yet , even before he told me so , it was imprinted upon my Understanding, that it was he ; yea and even before such Visions, he hath told me so ; and yet I saw him not. If any man , whom I had never seen , but only had heard news of him, should come to speak with me (I being either blind, or in the dark) and should tell me , who he were, I should believe him ; but I could not so resolutely affirm him to be that person , as if I had seen him. Yet , in this case, I could ; for here there is imprinted so clear a notice of him in the Mind, without seeing him , that it seems a kind of impossibility to doubt it ; for , our Lord will have it so engraven upon the Understanding , that it can no more be questioned , than even that which we see ; no nor yet so much ; for, in things which we see ; there remains sometimes a suspicion , whether we might not have fancied such a thing, and so mistaken it. But here , though upon the suddain, and as it were by way of surprise , one may begin to fall into a kind of suspicion , yet still we remain in so great a certainty , that the doubt hath no force: And so also doth it fall out in the other manner, whereby God instructs the Soul, and speaks to it without speaking, in such sort as I have already declared.

This is a language which hath so much of the Celestial in it that it cannot well be given to be understood by us here , how much soever we may desire it , unless our Lord himself be pleased to teach it by experience. For, our Lord conveys, and places that in the most interiour part of the Soul, which he is pleased that the same soul shall understand ; and there doth he represent it, without either any image, or form of words; but only after the way of that kind of Vision which I have already touched. And now , let this manner of God's making the Soul understand what he will, and his great Truths , and mysteries , be much observed. For, many times that which I understand, when our Lord declares any Vision, which his Divine Majesty is pleased to represent to me , is after this manner ; and me thinks it is a case where the Devil is least able to intermeddle, or intrude himself , for these reasons ; if they be not good, I am likely enough to be deceived. Now , this kind of Vision, and language , is so much a thing of Spirit , that there is no springing, or stirring in any of the Powers, nor in the Senses , in my opinion ; by which means the Devil may be able to gain any thing. Thus it happens sometimes ; lasting but a very little while. For , at other times

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me-thinks that neither the Powers are suspended , nor yet the Senses lost, but that they are all at home, and entire ; for, this happens not always in Contemplation, but rather very seldom : and when it doth , I say, that we neither operate any thing, nor do any thing ; but all seems to be the work of our Lord. It is , as when food is already conveyed into the Stomack , without either our having eaten it , or so much as knowing who put it there ; but only we understand well that there it is; though, in that case, it be neither known, what the food is, nor who carried it thither. Here it is very different ; for here these are known ; though, how the food is conveyed thither, I cannot tell ; for neither did I see it, nor understand it ; nor was I ever moved to desire it ; nor had it ever come to my knowldg before , that such a thing could possibly be.

In the *Speech*, which I touched before, God makes the Understanding observe, and reflect upon that which is said ; whether it desire to understand it, or no. For there, it seems , that the Soul hath some other kind of ears , wherewith to hear ; and that he makes her harken , and not , the while , to think of somewhat else ; as if one who could hear well were not suffered to stop his ears ; and that they cryed out aloud to him, who therefore must hear them, whether he would, or no ; but yet somewhat he doth, since he is attentive to understand what they say ; but here the Soul doth just nothing ; for even that little which was done in the former way , and which was only to harken , is taken from her now ; for now , she finds all dressed , and all eaten too : So that there is nothing to be done by her, but to enjoy. Just so , as any one , who, without ever having learnt , or so much as endeavoured to read , and much more, without any studying at all, should find a whole Science already possessed by him, and that, without knowing at all , either how , or whence it came , since he had never procured to acquire it , with so much , as learning his A. B. C. this last Comparison me-thinks declares some part of this Celestial guift ; for, the Soul finds her self here grown wise upon a sudden ; and that the Mystery of the most Holy Trinity, and other most sublime Articles, are so exactly declared to her, that there is not any Divine , with whom she would not adventure to dispute the truth of those high points.

The Soul remains here so amazed, that some one such Favour, as this , suffices to work a total change in her ; and to make her love nothing , but him, who, without any labour of hers, hath made her capable of so unspeakable blessings ; and to whom he communicates his secrets ; and whom he treats with arguments of so great friendship, and love , as en-

dure not to be written. For he doth some such Favours, as carry with them a kind of suspicion, in regard they are of so great admiration, and imparted to a person, who hath deserved them so very ill, that if one have not a very Lively Faith, they cannot be believed; and therefore I mean to speak of few of those which our Lord hath done me, unless I be expressly commanded; and unless it be of some few Visions, which perhaps may serve to do some good; either that such persons, to whom our Lord may impart the like, may not wonder, and think it impossible, as I did; or else that so I may declare the manner, and way, by which our Lord conducted my Soul; which is the thing, they have commanded me to write.

Returning therefore now to this manner of understanding, me-thinks our Lord is pleased, that, by all means, this Soul of ours shoulde have some notice here of that which passes in Heaven; and it seems to me that, as they do there understand one another without speaking (the truth of which I never knew till our Lord, through his goodness made me see it, and shewed it me in a certain Rapt) So also shoulde it be here; that God and the Soul, shoulde understand one another; because his Divine Majesty is pleased that they shall do so, without any other artifice, to make the mutual love known, which these to dear friends carry to one another. As here, when two persons love one another very dearly, and have good understandings, they seem able to understand themselves even without signes; by only looking upon one another. Thus it must be here, since, (without our knowing how) these two Lovers look earnestly, upon one another; as the Spouse saith to his Beloved in the *Canicles*; forso I think, I have heard, that it is expressed there.

O admirable benignity of thine, O God, who permittest thy self to be looked upon by those eyes, which have abused their sight so much as these of my Soul have done! At least, O my Lord, let them now remain accustomed (after this sight of thee) to look no more upon inferiour, and base Objects; nor let any thing be able to please them, out of thee. O great ingratitude of mortals! how far wilt thou extend? For I know by experience, that this is true, which I am saying. That what is said by me, is the least part of that Favour, which thou impartest to any such Soul, as thou vouchsafest to bring to such a State, as this. O you Souls, which have begun to use Prayer; and you who have true Faith, what blessings can you seek, which may any way be compared to the least of those, (besides that these are gained for ever) which are obtained by the servants of God, even in this mortal life of ours? consider, that it is most true also, that God gives himself to such,

such, as forsake all things for love of him. He is no accepter of persons, he loves all, nor hath any an excuse, how wicked soever he may have been; since our Lord hath proceeded after this manner with me; and advanced me to such a condition. Consider also, that this, which I am saying now is not so much as a Cipher of that, which may be said, but only so much is here delivered, as is necessary for making this manner of Vision, and Favour, which God is pleased to do to a Soul, to be in some sort understood.

But now, it is in no power of mine to declare that, which she finds, when our Lord is pleased to impart those secrets, and greatnesses of his; a delight so highly superiour to all that can possibly be imagined here; that it doth, with great reason, make them, who possess the same, abhor all the pleasures of the earth; which, all put together, are no better than meer dung, and dirt; nay it is, loathsome to bring these into Comparison at all with those others; even though they might be enjoyed for ever. And yet, of these Celestial consolations, what kind of poor proportion is that, which he is pleased to impart in this world; No more than as it were, one single drop of water, of that huge, ful-flowing River, which is prepared for us. It is a shame, and I apply it to my self; and if it were possible, for Souls to be ashamed in Heaven, I should be justly ashamed there more than any other. Why should we desire so great benedictions, and delights, and glory infinite, all at the cost of the good Jesus? shall we not weep at least with the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, since we will not help him to carry the Crofs, with *Simon the Cyrenian*? Or can we ever think of coming to enjoy that by the way of pleasures, and pass-times, which he gained for us with the expence of so much Blood? This is impossible. And can we think, by our aspiring to vain Honour, that we may be able to remedy that contempt, and scorn, which he endured for us, that we might reign for ever. This is unlikely. No, no, we take a wrong course quite; we shall never reach to our journeys end by such an erroneous way. Your Reverence must cry-out aloud to make these truths be heard, since it hath pleased God, to deprive me of this liberty, I would always be crying out to my self; that I came to hear and to understand God so very late, as may be seen by what I have written; so that it is an extream confusion to me to speak of it; and therefore I will hold my peace; and only say that, which I consider sometimes; (and I humbly beseech God, to bring me once to enjoy this immense Good) what an accidental glory, and gust, it will be for the Blessed Saints of Heaven, who enjoy this felicity, when they shall see, that although it were

were late, yet at length they left nothing unperformed, which it was possible for them to do for the love of God ! Nor did they fail to present him, with the very uttermost of whatsoever they could offer in all kinds, according to the power which they had, and the condition wherein they were placed, they giving more , who had more. How rich will he then find himself to be, who left all the riches he had for Christ? How full of honour , who rejected all honour ; and took pleasure in seeing himself much abased , and despised for the love of him. How wise will he see himself then, who rejoiced to see the world hold him for a fool ; since they called Wisdome it self by that name ? how few of such as these are there now in the world, by reason of our great Sins ? Alas, it seems, that all they, are spent, and gone, long agoe, whom the world was wont to esteem for fools , when they saw them perform those heroical acts of true Lovers of Christ.

O world ! world ! How dost thou gain Honour, by having few that know thee ! But now, what if we think, that God is more served by us, by our being taken for wise, and discreet ? this indeed must needs be it ; according as Discretion is used now adays. For, we presently think it to be small edification, not to go up and down with great composednes and authority, every one according to his rank and condition : even to the *Frier, Priest, or Nun*; it seems that to wear any things which are old or pieced were a kind of novelty, and a giving scandal to the weak ; and so it is also if they live with much recollection, and use much Prayer ; to such a passe the world is grown. But the study, and practises of Christian Perfection, and the great impulses which the Saints were wont to have, being now so much forgotten, and laid aside, is the thing , which, I believe, doth more harm to the miscarriages, which are committed in these times, than it could possibly be scandal to any , that such as are Religious should publish that to the world by their works , of which they talk in their words, in what mean account we ought to hold this world. For, out of such scandals, as these , our Lord would draw great advantages ; And if some be scandalized, others have remorse ; that at least we might have some little design or model of that , which Christ and his Apostles endured, since we have now more need of it, than ever. And what an excellent example did God take lately from us , in the person of that Blessed man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*? The world was now no longer able to endure such a Perfection , as his ; for now , they say , that the complexions of men are grown weaker ; and that now we cannot live as in former times. But that holy man lived in this time, and yet he had as fat, and fervent a Spirit, as men had in the days of old ; and so he trode

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the world under his feet. For, though every one do not goe bare-foot, nor perform so sharp and strict pannance as he, yet are there many other ways, as I have said before, whereby a man may tread the world under his feet; and our Lord will teach us these ways, when he finds a mind fit. And how great an one, did God bestow upon this Saint, of whom now I speak; to continue seven and fourty years in so sharp, and rigorous pannance, as is generally known? And I will say some thing of it, because I know that it is true.

He told me, and so he also did an other, from whom he was as little curious to conceal himself, as from me (but, as for me, the reason, why he did it, was the love he bare me; because our Lord would have it so; to the end, that he might help me, and encourage me also in a certain time of so great necessity, as I have and shall relate.) How, to the best of my remembrance, as he said, he had slept but one hour and a half in a day and a night, for fourty years together; and that it was the greatest mortification, and most troublesome pannance that he used, in those beginnings, to overcome himself in point of sleep; and that, in order also to this end he was always, at times, either kneeling, or standing upon his feet; when he slept, he sat; and that with his head leaning aside upon a little piece of wood fastned for that purpose in the wall. To extend his body at length in his Cell was not possible for him, though he should have a mind to it; for, it is known to be but four foot and a half in length. In all these years he never put on his Capouch, or Hood, how hot soever the Sun, or how great soever the rain might be; nor did he ever wear any thing upon his feet; nor was his body clad but only with a Habit of thick, course Sack-cloath, without any other thing next his skin; and this as straight, as could be endured, with a little short Cloak of the same over it. He told me, that, wheu the weather was extream cold, he was wont to put off his Mantle, and to leave the door, and the little window of his Cell open; that so, when afterward he put his cloak on again, and shut his door, he might give his body so much contentment by it, as that it might be quiet with this additional warmth. It was an ordinary thing with him not to eat till the third day after he had eaten last; and he told me (by way of answer to the wonder, in which I was at it,) that this was a thing very possible for one who accustomed himself to it. And a certain Companion of his also told me, that it hapned sometimes for him not to eat any thing at all in eight days; but that, perhaps, might be when he was in Prayer; for he used to have great Raps, and vehement impulses of the love of God; whereof my self was once an eye-witness. His poverty was extream; and so also was his

Mortification even from his youth. For he told me, that he hapned to live three years in an House of his Order, and not to know any of the Religious, but only by their speech; for he never lifted up his eyes; and so, whensoever he was to goe of necessity to any place, either in the streets, or high-ways, he could not tell how to do it, but by following the other Religious. As for women, he never looked upon any for the space of many years; he told me, that it was now all one with him, to see any body, or not to see them; But when I came to know him, he was very old; and his weakness so extream, that he seemed not to be composed, but as of the roots of trees. With all this sanctity of his he was very affable, though he were wont to express himself in very few words, unles some question were asked him; and he was very pleasing in them; for he had a choice Understanding. I would relate many things more of him, if I feared not, that your Reverence would ask me, why I put my self upon this kind of discourse; yea I have not written this little without some fear. And therefore I say no more, but only that he dyed as he lived, preaching, and admonishing the Religious of his Order. When he saw, he was come to an end, he said the Psalm: *Latatus sum in his, qua dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus; I have rejoiced in those things which were said to me: we will go into the house of our Lord;* and so, stooping down and kneeling he dyed.

Since that, our Lord hath been pleased to let me enjoy more of him now, than I did when he was alive; giving me counfel in diverse occasions; and I have seen him many times in exceeding great glory. The first time, that he appeared to me, he said: *O happy Penance, which hath obtained so great a reward!* with many other things. A year before he dyed he appeared to me, when we were absent from one another; and I knew that he should dye; and I advertised him thereof, whilst he was distant some leagues from me. When he gave up the Ghost, he appeared to me, and told me, that he was going to rest. I did not then believe it; but yet I related it to some; and within eight days after the news came to us, that he was dead; or rather, to speak more properly, that he had then begun to live for ever.

Behold here, how the severe Penance of his life ending in so great glory, that me thinks, he much more comforts me now, than when he was here. Our Lord told me once, that men should not aske any thing in his name, wherein he would not hear them; and my self have recommended many things to him, that he might beg them of our Lord; and I have found them granted. Be He Blessed for ever, Amen.

But

But what a talking have I kept here , that so I might stir up your Reverence , not to make account of any thing in this world ? As if you knew not this already : or, as if you were not resolued to leave all : or rather, as if you had not already put all this in execution. But I see such a deal of perdition in the world, that, howsoever my saying it serves for nothing, but only to weary me, by writing it , yet withal it is a kind of ease for me to do it ; all that, which I say, proving to be against my self. Our Lord forgive me , wheresoever I may have offended him , as to this particular ; and I beseech your Reverence also, to pardon me , for trying you thus to no purpose ; but, it seems, that I will needs make you do Penance for that, wherein my self commit the Sin.

CHAP. XXVIIJ.

She treats of the great Favours, which our Lord did her ; and how he appeared to her the first time. She declares , what an Imaginary Vision is ; and discovers the great effects , and testimonies , which such things leave in the Soul, when they are of God.

But now, to return to our purpose , I had this kind of Vision afore-said, for some few days , after a kind of continual manner ; and it was so beneficial to me , that I never went out of Prayer ; and besides , whatsoever I then hapned to do , I procured it might be in such sort , as that it should not displease him, whom I evidently saw to be there , as a witness of all that which pasted. And , though sometimes , I had some fear, through the many things, which they said to me , yet that fear did not last long ; because I was well assured by our Lord himself.

Being one day in Prayer , it pleased our Lord to shew me his Hands only ; and they had such an excess of beauty in them, as I am not able to express. But this struck me into a very great fear ; as indeed every novelty is wont to bring me in the beginnings of any Supernatural Favour, which our Lord is pleased to do me. Within few days after this, I saw also his Divine Face ; which did totally me thinks leave me ab-sorpt. For my part , I could not understand , why our Lord shewed himself to me so by little and little ; since afterwards he resolved to do me the Favour, that I might see him, all ; till I came to understand, that our Lord went conducting me according to my natural weakness. Let him

him be eternally Blessed for it; since so great a Glory, as that, presented all together, and encountering with a subject, so base, and wicked, as my self, would never have been endured; and thus our Merciful Lord who knew this well, so disposed of things. Your Reverence will perhaps imagine, that there was not need of much courage, for the beholding of Hands and Face so beautiful. But indeed Bodies glorified have so very great beauty, that the glory, they bring with them in our beholding a thing, so Supernatural, and delightful, doth astonish and distract; and so it put me in such a fear, that I grew to be in much disorder, and trouble; though afterwards I remained with certainty, and security, and such other effects, as that my fear did quickly vanish.

Upon a certain day of *S. Paul*, whilst I was hearing *Masse*, all this most Sacred Humanity of Christ was represented to me, as it uses to be painted after the *Resurrection*; with so great Beauty, and Majesty, as I wrote once to your Reverence, when you commanded me so expressly to do it; and I remember, that I was troubled enough at it. For it cannot be uttered without even annihilating ones self; but yet howsoever I did what you commanded me, the best I could; and therefore *I* need not take care, to repeat it particularly here. Only I say, that, if there were no other thing in Heaven to delight our sight, but the excessive beauty of Glorified Bodies, that felicity would be immense; especially, to behold the Humanity of *Jesus Christ* our Lord, an exceeding great Glory. For, since the Majesty thereof is discovered to be so great, whensover it is represented to us here, according to that proportion, whereof our misery, in this mortal life of ours, is capable; what will it be then, when we shall entirely enjoy so high a Good? This Vision, though it be Imaginary, [or representing it self, by way of Image to me] was never seen by me with the eyes of my Body; nor indeed was any other but only with the eyes of my Soul. They, who know these things, better than I, affirme, that the former Vision is of a higher, and more perfect kind, than this; and this also much more than those others, which are seen with these corporal eyes. For, these latter, they say, are of the lowest kind of all, and wherein the Devil is able to induce most Illusions; though then *I* could not understand any such matter; but rather desired, that, when I was to receive any Favour of that kind, it might be so, as that I might see it with my corporeal eyes, to the end that my Ghostly Father might no longer tell me, that I did but fancy things. It hapned also to me presently after it was past, that my self also conceived, I did but fancy it; and so I was troubled somerimes for having told my Ghostly Father of it; as doubting, whether I had not

not deceived him. This was the occasion of another lamentation , and so I went to him again , and told him of it. Upon this , he asked me , whether indeed I had thought so , before ; and whether I had had any purpose to deceive him. I told him the truth ; who (forasmuch as I am able to understand of my self) had not lied,nor intended it ; nor would I, for the whole world, have told him one thing for another. This he knew very well ; and so he did his best to quiet me. But I had so great aversion from going to give him trouble with these things , that I know not how, the Devil made me, for my greater torment , conceive , that I had feigned, in what I had said.

But our Lord returned again so quickly to do me this Favour , and to unfold this truth to me, that I grew quickly to be out of all doubt, whe- it were a fancy, or no ; and since that time I see my folly very clearly. For, though I should employ many years, in conceiving , how I might be able to figure a thing of so extream beauty, I should never have either the power , or the wit , to do it ; for , it did far exceed all that can be imagined in this world, by the clearnes, and brightness thereof. It is not a Splendor which dazles ; but a delightful brightness ; and a lustre infused,which affords an exceeding great pleasure to the sight, and is far from wearying it ; nor doth that light offend , whereby we see this ob-ject of so Divine Beauty. This , is a light so very different from all of this inferiour world, that even the brightness of the Sun it self,which we see, is so dim a thing , in comparison of that clarity, and light, which is here represented to our sight,that the eyes would scarce open themselves to behold it. It is, as if we beheld a most pure water running all upon Chrystal, with the Sun reflecting upon, and striking through it; in com-parison of some other very muddy sees in a cloudy day ; and running upon an earthy bottom. Not that there is any Sun represented in it ; nor that Light like the Light of the Sun ; in fine, this Light seems a na-tural Light ; and the other a kind of artificialthing. This is a Light , which never sets ; and hath no night ; but as it is ever Light , nothing disturbs it ; in fine, it is of such a kind , that , how sublime soever the understanding of any person be , he would never all the days of his life be able to conceive rightly what kind of thing it is. And it pleases God to set it before us so on a sudden, that we cannot so soon open our eyes ; if that were needful for the seeing it ; but it helps us no more to have them open, than shut, whensoever our Lord is pleased ; for , we see it, whether we will , or no. Nor is there any distraction that can divert us from it ; nor any power, to resist it ; nor, on the other side, any di-ligence, or care, that can procure it. This I have had good experience of, as I shall declare.

C c .

But

But that, which I would relate now is the manner , how our Lord is pleased to shew himself by these Visions. I say not , that I will declare , in what sort this so strong a light conveys it self into the inward sense , and imprints so clear an Image upon the Understanding , as to make it directly seem that He is there ; for, this belongs to such as are learned ; and our Lord hath not been pleased to give me to comprehend the manner of it ; and I am so ignorant , and of so gross an Understanding , that, howsoever men have endeavoured to declare it to me , I have not been able to conceive the manner of it. And this is very certain , that, howsoever it may seem to your Reverence , that my Understanding is lively , and quick , yet really it is not ; for I have had experience in many particulars ; that it comprehends no more , than that which is put into me . Sometimes , he , who was my Confessor , would be amazed at my ignorances ; and he never made me understand , nor did I indeed desire to know , how God did this ; or how this could be ; nor did I ask him about it . Though , as I have said , I treated many years with men of great learning to know , whether this , or that , were a Sin , or no ; in this I was not wanting ; but , as for the rest , I had no need , to think of more than that God was the Author of it all ; and I saw , that I had no reason now to be affrighted , but to praise him . Nay , the things which carryed difficulty with them did breed devotion in me ; and the more difficulty , the more devotion . I will therefore now declare that , which I have understood by experience ; how our Lord doth this ; your Reverence will declare better , and will unfold all that , which shall be obscure , and I know not how to deliver .

It seemed to me indeed , in some respects , that it was only an Image , or representation , which I saw ; but , in many other , not ; but that it was Christ himself ; considering the excessive kind of clarity , wherewith he vouchsafed to shew himself to me . One time it was after so confused a manner , that me - thought it was a Representation , or Image ; yet not like those designs , and draughts , made here , how perfect soever they may be ; for I have seen many good ones : But it is an impertinency to conceive that the one hath any resemblance to the other ; no more than a person Living hath to his picture , which how well - soever it be drawn , will never yet arrive so , to reach the Natural in all respects ; but that the one appears alive , and the other dead . But , let us lay this aside , though yet the relation be very fit , and proper . I say not that I frame an exact Comparison , for no Comparisons agree perfectly ; But the truth is , that there is the same difference , in what I say , from an Image , as there is between a thing alive , and a thing painted . And if you

you will needs have this to be an Image, it was a living Image, and not a dead man, but Christ alive; and it gives me also to understand, that he is both God, and Man; not as he was laid in the Sepulcher, but as he was afterwards in the Resurrection. And somtimes, he comes with such an immense kind of Majesty, that none can doubt, but that it is our Lord himself; and especially, after receiving the Blessed Sacrament; for, then we know well that he is there, since our faith tells us this. He shewes himself then so entire a Lord of this little House, that the whole Soul sees her self, to be even dissolved, and consumed in Christ.

O my Jesus! Who can express so as to be understood the Majesty, wherewith thou shewest thy self? And how absolutely thou art Lord of the whole world, and of the Heavens; and of a thousand worlds; and of innumerable Worlds, and Heavens, which thou canst create, the Soul understands, according to that high Majesty, with which thou representest thy self to her: for then he knows, that all this World is just nothing in respect of that, wherof thou deservest to be Lord. Here, O my sweet Jesus, the Soul sees clearly, that it is but a beggerly kind of power, which the Devils have, in comparison of thine; and how he, who pleases thee, may trample all Hell under his feet. Here the Soul sees the reason, the Devils had to tremble, when thou didst descend to Limbus Patrum; & how they could have wished, to have been rather in thousands of other and lower Hells, to avoid the sight of so dreadful a Majesty: Likewise I perceive thou art here disposed to let our Souls see, how great thou art; and the power which thy most Sacred Humanity hath accompanied by thy Divinity. Here is well represented, what kind of thing the Day of Judgment will be, where we shall see the Majesty of this King; and behold his rigour towards the wicked. Here is true Humility left in the Soul, by her seeing her own misery, whereof now she can be ignorant no longer. Here, that confusion, and true repentance for Sin; where, even when she is seeing how greatly our Lord shews her his love, yet knows she not, where to dispose of her self, but is, as it were, out-right annihilated. I say, this kind of Vision is of so excessive power, and strength, when our Lord is pleased to shew a Soul so eminent a portion of his greatness and Majesty, by it, that I hold it impossible, unless our Lord be pleased to assist her very supernaturally, by making her remain in Rapt, and Extasie, (and so to lose the Vision of that Divine presence, by the act of enjoying) it would be (as I say) impossible for any person to endure it; though afterward, it is true, that it is forgotten. Yet, this cannot be wholly forgotten; in regard, that Majesty, and Beauty remains so deeply imprinted there; except,

when our Lord is pleased that the Soul shall suffer some aridity, and great desolation, as I will declare afterward; for, then, it seems even to forget God himself. The Soul is now clearly another thing, than she was before; and always thoroughly replenisht, and absorpt; in my opinion, she hath a lively kind of Love conamunicated to her anew, in a much higher degree. For, though that kind of Vision aforesaid (which I declared to represent God without any Image) be a thing more sublime, in it self, yet, for the making it continue long in our memory, according to our weaknes, and to entertain, and keep our thoughts well employed, it makes very much to our purpose, that so Divine a Presence doth remain represented, and lodged in the Imagination. And so these two kinds of Visions come always together. And indeed it is thus, that they come. For, the excellency, and beauty, and glory of the most Holy Humanity is in this beheld with the eyes of the Soul. And by that other way, before declared, he gives us to understand, that he is God; and powerful; that he can do all; that he commands all; and governs all; and that his love doth replenish all things.

Martin
of the
Devil
by
C. C.

This kind of Vision is to be valued at a very high rate; and, in my opinion, is without danger; for, it is discerned by the effects that the Devil hath no power herein. It is true, that three, or four several times, he hath had a mind to represent our Lord himself to me after this manner; by a false representation. He takes the form of flesh; but he cannot counterfeit it with any such glory, as when it is indeed of God. The Devil is wont to make certain representations, for destroying some true Vision, which the Soul hath seen; but she doth of her self resist him, she is so troubled, and distasted, and disquieted, that she loses that devotion, and gust, which she had before; and remains also without any Prayer at all. This hapned to me, three, or four times, in the beginnings, as I was saying. This false Vision is so very different a thing from the other, that whosoever hath arrived to the only Prayer of Quiet, will, I believe, understand it by the effects, which have been spoken of in the Discourse concerning *Words*, or *Speeches* supernatural. It is a thing most easily known, and, unles a Soul have a mind to be deceived, I believe the Devil cannot do it, if she walk with humility, and simplicity.

Whosoever hath had any true Vision from God will almost instantly perceive it; for, though it begins with Regalo, and gust, yet the Soul shakes it off; and besides, in my opinion, the gust is different in it self; and, not carrying the appearance of a Love pure, and chaste; it soon discovers what it is. So that, wherefover there is experience, in my opinion, the Devil will not be able to do any hurt.

Now,

Now, that all this should be but a meer Imagination, or conceit, is utterly impossible ; and hath no colour at all. For, the beauty, and fairnes, of one only hand doth far surpass all our Imagination. And besides, without our remembring, or having thought of any such matter, to see such things present, in an instant, which could never have been so fitted, and adjusted by the Imagination in a long time, (in regard that it so much transcends, as I have said, that, which we are able to comprehend in this world) it must be impossible : And though we could do somewhat in this kind, it would be clear upon this other reason, which I will now declare. For, if we should represent any such thing with our own Understanding (besides, that it would not have any such great operations, as this true Vision hath ; nor indeed any at all) it would be but as one, who would very fain sleep ; whereas yet, he remains awake ; because he cannot fall asleep. And though he desires to sleep, and needs it, having some infirmity, or weakness in his head, and procures, of himself, to get into a slumber, &c uses all his diligences, and sometimes thinks that he doth somewhat ; yet, if, indeed, it be not true, and real sleep, it will not sustain him, nor strengthen his Heads. Nay rather it will sometimes become so much more idle. So is it also partly in this case ; for the Soul remains empty, and idle, and not sustained, and strong, but rather wearied, and disgusted ; whereas, in the other former case, it cannot be expressed, what treasures are required ; when not only the Soul is enriched, but even the Body also it self, gets health and strength.

Now, this and other reasons did I alleadge, when they told me, that those things were of the Devil ; and that I did but fancy them to my self, (which hapned often) and I would be bringing Comparisons, the best I could, and our Lord made me light upon ; but all availed little ; for, there being very holy persons in that place, and I being even misery it self in comparison of them, and our Lord not guiding them by this way, they instantly feared, that my sins, in all appearance, were the cause of those effects ; and so it went from one to another, in such sort, that they came to be acquainted with these secrets of mine ; though I discovered them to none, but only my Confessor ; or to such, as he bade me to impart them to.

I said to them once, that if they, who spoke thus to me, should affirm, that some person, with whom I had just done talking, and whom I knew very well, was not that person indeed, but that I only fancied it to my self, and that they were certain of this ; I should without all doubt have much more easily believed them, than that which I saw. But, if this person left certain Jewels with me, and they remained still in my

hands, as pawns of the great love he bare me ; and that formerly I had been the owner of no such Jewels, whereas now I saw, I was rich, who before had been so poor, I should then not be able to believe them, even though I would, especially since I could shew these Jewels of mine to others. For every one who knew me saw clearly, that my Soul was grown another thing, than before ; and so my Ghostly Father told me. For, the difference was very great in all respects, and not in any doubtful, or disguised ; but so, as that all might discern it very clearly. For, having been so wicked, I used to say, I could not believe, that, if the Devil did this to deceive me ; and to carry me to Hell, he would use meanes so very contrary to his end ; as it was, to root out Vices, and to plant Vertues, and Strength of Spirit in the room ; for I saw clearly my self possessed of these at some time or other by this way.

My Ghostly Father, as I was saying, was a Father of the Society of JESUS, a very holy man ; and he also made the same answer, as I came to understand afterward. He was a person of much discretion, and of great humility ; but yet that humility of his cost me many troubles. For, though he were a man of much Prayer, and besides learned, yet put he no trust at all in himself ; and, our Lord not guiding his Soul by this way, he had much trouble with me in several kinds. And afterward I came to know, that they wished him to take heed of me, & to be careful, least the Devil should deceive him, by his believing any part of that which I should tell him ; and to this purpose they would be alleadging the examples of some others to him. All this gave me vexation enough ; and, by degrees, I came so far, as to fear, that I should scarce find any to hear my Confessions ; but that every one would fly from me. So that I did nothing but weep ; and it was the providence of God, that this Father would yet still continue to hear me. But indeed, he was so great a Servant of God, that he would expose himself to all for his sake ; and so he still bade me, not to offend God ; nor to swerve from the directions which he gave me ; and I should not fear that he would leave me ; and he would ever be animating, and quieting me ; and still he commanded me, that I should conceal nothing from him ; which I always observed ; and, I doing thus, he told me, that, though it were the Devil, he would be able to do me no hurt ; but rather, that our Lord would draw good out of that ill, which he would do my Soul ; and he procured to perfect me in all he could. I being in such fear, did obey him in all things ; though after an imperfect manner : For he had trouble enough with me, when I confessed my self to him, in these difficulties, above the space of three years ; for, in the great persecutions, which

which I had, and in many things, wherein our Lord permitted, that the world should make ill judgements of me, (and many of them without any fault of mine) I would ever be coming with them to him; and he was blamed in respect of me; whereas he was in no fault at all. It would have been impossible, if he had not been a man of much sanctity; and that our Lord did animate him greatly, and enable him to endure so much. For he was to make answer to all them, who held me for lost, but they believed him not; and on the other side he was also to quiet me, and to recover me out of that fear, wherein I was, bringing still greater; and he was to endeavour to satisfie me, whien, upon every Vision, which was new, or unusual to me, our Lord was pleased to permit, that afterward I should be subject to very great fears. All this proceeded from my being, and having been a very great Sinner: Yet would he comfort me still with much pity, and compassion. And if he had believed himself, I had not suffered so much. For, God gave him to understand the truth in all things; and I am perswaded, that the Sacrament of Pennance, admistristed to me by Him, gave him light.

Those other Servants of God, who could not well assure themselves, were wont to be very conversant with me. And, when I would casually be speaking of some things, they would understand them in a different fence: (There was one of these, whom I particularly loved; for, my Soul was infinitely obliged to him; and he was a very holy man: And I was extreamly troubled, to see, that I could not make my self be understood righty by him, whilst he also did extraordinarily desire my good, and that our Lord would give me light;) so that what I spake (as I was saying) without reflection upon it, seemed to them want of humility; and as soon, as afterward, they discerned me to commit any fault (whereas they might very easily have discerned many) all was instantly condemned by them. Sometimes, they would be asking me certain questions; and I would answer them with plainenes, and without reservation, and it seemed to them, that I had a mind to teach them; and that I held my self for some wise woman; all went instantly to my Ghostly Father; for certainly they desired my good; and he chid me. This lasted a long time, I being afflicted many wayes on the one side; and yet, on the other, with the Favours our Lord did me, I endured all.

I relate this, to the end it may the better be understood, how great a trouble it is not to have some person at hand, who hath experience in this way of Spirit. For, if our Lord had not favoured me, as he did, I know not what would have become of me; since there were occasions

ons now to have put me even out of my witts ; and sometimes I was at that pass , that I knew not what to do , but only to lift up mine eyes to our Lord . For the contradiction , and opposition of the good against a poor , wicked , and weak woman , and so timorous , as I was ; seems no small matter , as here related : and yet having passed through very great troubles in this life of mine , I have found this last to have been of the greatest . I humbly beseech our Lord , that I may have done his Divine Majesty some little Service in this ; for that they , who accused , and condemned me , did him Service in it , I am very sure ; and that all hath greatly turned to my good .

[CHAP. XXIX.]

She prosecutes the Discourse begun ; and relates some eminent Favours , which our Lord was pleased to do her ; and what his Divine Majesty did for the securing her , and for the enabling her to answer her Contradictours .

I Have digressed very much , from my purpose ; for I pretended to declare the reasons , whereby we may discerne , that the thing , whereof I spoke , was not a fancy ; for , how should we be able , by any study of ours , to represent the Humanity of Christ to our selves ; and devile so great a beauty ? For which there needed not a little time , if we would frame a thing any way like it . Well may one represent it to his Imagination ; and stand looking upon it for some time ; and consider his shape , and complexion ; and so goe perfecting it by little and little , and recommending that Image over to his Memory ; for , who can take this power from us ? Since this we can do by our own Understanding ; But in that other , whereof we were speaking , there is no meanes for this ; but we must behold it , when our Lord is pleased to represent it to us ; and how he will , and what he will ; Nor can we diminish , or add any thing , nor use any means to that end , how much soever we may endeavour it , either towards the seeing it , or forbearing to see it , when we will , and when we would fix our sight upon the beholding any particular thing , the sight of Christ is instantly lost . It hapned to me for two years and a half , that very ordinarily God was pleased to vouchsafe me this Favour ; and it is now more than three , since he hath deprived me
of

of the so continual use of this, by affording me another of a higher kind; (as perhaps I shall declare afterward,) And I seeing then that he would be speaking to me; and I, the while, beholding that extream beauty and the suavity, with which he uttered those words, with that most Lovely, and Divine Mouth; and sometimes also, with rigour; whilst I had a kind of extream desire to see the colour of those eyes, and the size, and shape they had; to the end, I might be able to relate the same, I could never obtain to see them; nor doth my diligence serve to procure it, but the Vision is rather absolutly lost. And though somtimes I see, he looks upon me, with a kind of sweetnes and compassion; yet this spectacle is of so mighty a force, that the Soul is not able to endure it, but remains in so high a Rapt, that, the more to enjoy Him all, she loseth this most beautiful sight. So that here it serves to little purpose, either to will, or not to will any thing; and it is clear, that our Lord looks for nothing, but humility, and confusion of our selves, and for a mind to take that which is given, and to praise him, who gives it. And it holds in all true Visions without exception, that one can do nothing at all, either towards the seeing more or less; and that all our diligences put together, are neither able to do any thing, nor undo; for, our Lord will have us see very clearly, that this is no work of ours, but only of his Divine Majesty; whereupon we are so little moved to be the prouder by them; that they rather make us humble and timerous; considering that as our Lord deprives us of the power to see that which we desire, so he can also take these Favours and his grace from us too; in such sort, as that we may be utterly lost. We must therefore always walk in fear, as long as we live here in this banishment.

Our Lord hath almost ever represented himself to me as risen again. And in the Sacred Hoast the same, except it be somtimes for strengthning me, when I chance to be in tribulation, that he shewed me his wounds, or as he was upon the Cross, or as in the Garden ; and somtimes more seldome, with his Crown of Thornes ; and at other times, carrying his Cross ; and this, as I was saying, uses to occur but in the time of some necessity, either of mine own, or of others ; but yet always in flesh glorified. And I have suffered affronts, and vexations enow in telling this ; and great persecutions, and many fears. They thought themselves so very sure that it was the Devil, that there wanted not certain persons, who wished that I might be Exorcised for that purpose ; this gave me very little trouble : But the thing which I felt in good earnest, was, the seeing my Confessors afraid to hear

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my Confessions, or when I came to know, that they were told tales. But yet still, upon the whole matter, I know not how to be sorry for having seen these Celestial Visions; nor would I give any one of them for all the excellencies and delights of this whole world; for I ever held these things to be a very great Favour of our Lord; and I esteem them an exceeding great treasure; and our Lord himself hath assured me therefore many times. Withal, I found my self grow hereby to love his Divine Majesty very much; and to him would I ever go to complain of all the troubles I had; and I always came out of Prayer, both with comfort, and addition of strength. As for them, I would not presume to contradict them; for I saw it made all worse, as seeming to them, that it was want of humility in me; but I treated with my Ghostly Father, who always comforted me much when he saw me afflicted.

As my Visions grew on to increase, one of them, who assisted me before, and used to Confess me somtimes, (when the Sub-Rectour was not in the way) began to tell me, it was manifest that it was the Devil; and commanded me (since there was no meanes to resist him) that I should always be Crossing, and blessing my self, when I saw any Vision; and that I should use some exterior action of scorn, and that I should hold it certainly to be the Devil; and that perhaps by this meanes he would come no more; but that I should be afraid of nothing, because God would keep me, and would remove that temptation from me. This was very painful to me; for, considering that I could not possibly believe, but that it was God, it was a terrible thing for me to undergo; Nor could I desire that it might be taken from me; but yet, in fine, I performed all those acts which I was commanded; and I besought our Lord with much instance, to free me from being deceived; this I did continually, and that with abundance of Tears. I begged it also by the prayers of S. Peter, and S. Paul; in regard that I having had the first of all my Visions upon the Day of their Festivity, our Lord told me that they would so take care of me, that I should not be deceived. And accordingly I have often seen (and that very clearly, though yet not by way of any Imaginary Vision) these two Glorious Saints, my very good Patrons, upon my left hand. But now, this making signes of contempt, put me to excessive trouble; when I did see this Vision of our Lord: for, when I saw him present before mine eyes, it was impossible for me to believe that it was the Devil, though they shoud have torne me in pieces: and therefore it was a very severe kind of Pennance they put upon me. Now, that I might

might not be so perpetually Crossing my self, I took a *Cross* into my hands ; and this I did almost alwayes ; but, indeed, I used not those signes of scorn so often ; for it afflicted me too much. I well remembred the affronts and injuries which the Jews put upon our Lord ; and so I humbly besought him to pardon me if I did the like, since I did it in Obedience to them, whom he had appointed in his own place ; and I prayed him not to lay it to my charge, since they were the Officers whom himself had placed in his Church. He told me I should not be troubled at it ; and that I did well in obeying them, and, that he would bring them to understand the truth. But, when they took away from me the use of Prayer, me thought our Lord was grown angry at it ; he bad me tell them that this was tyranny ; and he gave me also reasons, to make me know that this was not the Devil ; I will touch upon some of them afterward.

When once I held the *Cross* in my hand, which was at the end of my *Rosary*, he took the same into his ; and when he gave it me again, it consisted of four great *Stones*, incomparably more pretious than Diamonds ; for there is nothing here that can equal this Supernatural way ; a Diamond is but a Counterfeit, and imperfect kind of Stone, in respect of those seen here. They had the Five Wounds of our Lord in them, after a most curious manner of expression ; he told me, that I should see it just so from that time forward ; and so I did ; and now I no longer saw the matter, whereof the Cross was made, but only these precious Stones ; yet so, as that no other saw them, but my self.

When they began to command me to make these tryals, and use resistance to those Favours, they increased much more ; for, though I had a mind to divert my self, yet I never was out of Prayer ; nay, me thinks I was in Prayer, even whilst I slept ; for here was much increased still the Love of our Lord ; and the making those complaints which I uttered to him ; and my not being able to endure it ; nor was it in my power (though I had desired it ; and least of all, when I procured it) to give over my thinking on him. But yet still I obeyed as well as I could ; though I were able to do little or nothing therein. Our Lord did never free me from obeying them ; but, howsoever he commanded me to do as they bad me, he yet gave me assurance on the other side, and instructed me also what I should say to them ; and the same he doth likewise at this day ; and he gave me such concluding reasons, as caused in me all sufficient assurance. Not long after this, his Divine Majesty hath begun to perform what he had been pleased to promise

mise me before ; to assure me yet more, that it was he ; for there grew in me so great a love of God, that I knew not who infused it into me ; for it was of a very Supernatural kind ; nor was it I who procured it. I found my self to dye, through a desire to see God ; nor did I know how or where to seek, or find this life, but by the way of death. There came upon me so great impetuositie of this love, which howsoever they were not so insupportable, nor yet altogether of so high value as those others were which I have related, yet knew I not, what to do with my self ; for nothing could now give me satisfaction ; nor was I able even to retain my self ; but that really it seemed to me, as if my Soul had been torn out of my Body.

O sovereign artifice of our Lord ! what choice, and delicate industry art thou pleased to use with this miserable Slave of thine ? For, thou didst hide thy self from me ; and yet withal, didst even then press upon me by thy love, bringing on me such a delightful, and savoury kind of death, as the Soul, by her good will, would never be delivered from. Whosoever hath never tryed these so great impetuositie of Divine Love, it is impossible he should understand them ; for this is not a kind of restlessness of the breast, nor any of that kind of devotions, which are wont sometimes, as it were, to stop the breath ; in such sort, as that the Soul is not able to contain her self ; that is an inferiour kind of Prayer, and therein we are to procure to remove such kind of agitations, and vehemencies, as those ; and to endeavour to recollect them sweetly within our selves ; so to appease, and calme the Soul. For, this is, in some sort, as when little Children cry, and sob sometimes so thick, that they are even ready to choak ; and, by giving them drink, that excessive passion begins to cease. So in this case also is Reason to take the bridle into her hand ; for perhaps the natural constitution contributes somwhat to this state of mind. Let consideration be used, for fear lest all should not be perfect ; and lest a great part thereof fall out to have somwhat of the Sensual in it ; and let this Child be stilled by some Regalo of Love, which may express it self by a gentle and sweet kind of way ; and not thus by blows (as they say) and violence : and let them recollect this love of theirs more inwardly ; and not like some Pott, which boyles over, and all is lost, because no discretion was used in the quantity of the fuel put under it. But let them moderate the cause of this fire, and seek to quench the flame with sweet and gentle, not with forced, or painful tears, as they are wont to be, which proceed from such a vehement kind of sense, and do much harm. My self used to have such as these in my beginnings ; and they would

would ever leave my head in such disorder, and my Spirit in such a weariness, that I was not able all the next day, or longer, to return to Prayer. So that we are to use great discretion in those beginnings of ours, that all may go on with sweetnes; and that the Spirit may be taught to work inwardly; and we must procure that the exteriour be avoyded as much as we can. But now, these other impetuositie are of a far indifferent kind; for here it is not we who lay on the wood; but the fire seems to be made already to our hands; and instantly we are cast into it, that so we may be burnt. The Soul doth not here procure to make he. self feel the wound made in her by the absence of our Lord; but they drive somtimes a sharp Arrow into the very liveliest part of the bo vels and heart somtimes; so that the Soul her self knows not either what the ailes, or what she desires; she understands very well, that she desires and loves God; and that the said Arrow seems to be toucht and rubbed over with some hearb, to make her hate her self for the love of thi. Lord, and withal her heart she would lose her life for his sake.

It is not in our power to express or relate the manner how God approaches to such a Soul, or the excessive pain it causeth her; which makes her not know what to do with her self. But yet this pain is so favoury withal, that there is no delight in this life, which gives her more gust. For, the Soul, as I was saying, would always be dying of this Disease. This pain, and this glory together did so distract me, that I knew not how they both could possibly consist. O what a thing it is, to see a Soul so wounded! for, she is, I say, just in such sort, as that one may very well affirm her to be wounded from this most excellent cause of it; for now she sees very clearly, that she her self did contribute no thing whence this Love should grow; but only it seems that some Spark falls down suddenly upon her from that immense Love of our Lord to her, which sets her all on fire. O how often do I remember that Verse of David, whensoever I find my self in this case; *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus meus;* As the Hart desires after the Fountains of water: so doth my Soul desire after thee, O my God. For really; me thinks that this is properly fulfilled then in my self. Whensover this comes not upon me with great violence, me thinks I can a little appease it; (at least the Soul endeavours to find some remedy, for she knows not what to do) with the performing of certain Pennances; But they are felt by her no more, nor puts it her to any more pain to shed her blood, than if the Body were dead. She is in earnest search after the

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finding out some new ways or means to do somthing whereby she may suffer for the love of God. But, so great is that other former grief of mind, that I know not what Corporal torment can remove it ; for the remedy thereof consists not in such things as these, since these medicines are too inferiour for so high a malady. There is indeed some little ease ; and the affliction passes away to some small proportion by this means, and by begging the remedy of her misery at Gods hands ; though none she sees but only death ; for, by that she hopes entirely to enjoy her Sovereign Good. At other times this pain falls upon a Soul so fiercely, that neither this, nor any thing else can be done ; for, it mutilates the whole body ; neither can she stir her feet, or hands ; and if the chance to be standing, and would sit down, she doth it like one transported ; for, she cannot so much as breath, but only utters certain profound lamenting sighs, not great in shew, because she is not able to exprest them, though very great interiourly, and as re-sented.

It pleased our Lord, that I have had somtimes this following Vision. I saw an *Angel* very near me, towards my left side, in a Corporal forme ; though yet I am not wont to see any thing of that kind but very rarely. For, though Angels be represented often to me, yet it is without my seeing them, but only according to that former Vision, whereof I speake before. In this Vision our Lord was pleased that I should see this Angel thus. He was not great, but rather little ; very beautiful ; his face so inflamed, that he appeared to be of those most Superior Angels, who seem to be all on fire ; and he well might be of them whom they call *Seraphims* ; for they never tell me their names ; yet I well perceive that in Heaven there is so great a difference between some Angels and others, as I am no way able to express. I saw that he had a long *Dart* of gold in his hand ; and at the end of the iron below, me thought there was a little fire ; and I conceived that he thrust it several times through my heart after such a manner, as that it passed my very Bowels ; and when he drew it forth, me thought it pulled them out with it, and left me wholly inflamed with a great love of God. The pain of it was so great, that it forced me to utter such groanes, and the suavity which that extremity of pain caused me so excessive, that there was no desiring to be rid of it ; nor is the Soul then contented with less than God himself. This is no Corporal, but a Spiritual pain ; though yet the Body do not fail to participate some, yea a great part thereof. It is such a delightful enter-course, which passes here between the Soul and God, as I beseech him of

of his infinit goodness, that he will give some touch, or tast of it, to whosoever shall imagine that I ly. During the time when I was in this state, I went up and down like one transported, neither cared I, either to see or to speak, but only to be consumed and burnt up with my pain, which was a greater glory to me, than any can be found in the creatures.

In this state was I several times, when our Lord was pleased that these so very great Raps should come upon me, which I was not able sometimes to resist, even when I was in presence of Secular people; and so to my great grief they grew to be publique. But, since the time that I am grown to have these Raps, I feel not this pain so much as that other, whereof I spoke before (though I cannot call the Chapter to mind.) But that pain is different in many kinds; and of more value. When this begins, whereof I am now speaking, it seems that our Lord doth ravish the Soul, and put her into Extatique out of hand; and so no room is left for feeling any pain, or suffering, because instantly the time of enjoying comes in. Let him be Blessed for ever, who vouchsafes to impart so high Favours, to a person, who corresponds so ill with so great benefits.

CHAP. XXX.

She resumes the discourse of her Life; and how our Lord remedie many of her troubles, by bringing that holy man, Fray Pedro de Alcantara, of the Order of the Glorious S. Francis, to the place where she was. She declares the great temptations, and inward troubles which sometimes she endured.

But now when I came to observe, the little or nothing, which I was able to effect towards the resisting of these so great impetuositie, whereof I was speaking I grew to be in great fear in having them; for I could not understand, how Pain and Joy might possibly consist together. That Corporal pain and Spiritual joy were compatible I knew well; but, that so excessive a Spiritual paine, should be compatible with so extraordinary a Spiritual gust, did even amaze me. And still

still I did not give over to endeavour to resist the arival thereof ; though yet I had so little power that way, that somtimes I grew weary. I armed my self with the *Cross*, and so procured to defend my self from him, who by it defended and succoured us all. I saw that none understood me ; and this I understood very clearly, though yet I durst not say so to any one, but my Ghostly Father ; for, that indeed had justified them in saying that I wanted humility.

Our Lord was pleased to remedy a great part of my trouble ; and even for that time all ; by bringing that blessed man *Fra Pedro de Alcantara* thither, of whom I made mention before, when I spake somewhat of his great Pennance. Amongst other things, I have been informed, that, for twenty years togeather, he had worn a Cilice of *Lattin*. This man was the Authour of certain little *Treatises*, concerning *Prayer*, written in *Spanish* ; and they are now in the hands of many. For he, as being a person, who had accustomed himself much to that holy exercise, wrote very profitably thereof for them, who are addicted to it. He observed the first *Rule* of the Blessed S. *Francis*, according to the full rigour of the same. When therefore a certain Widdow, [*Guimara d'Ulla*] of whom I spoke else-where, chap. 24. (who was a great Servant of God, and a particular friend of mine) came to know that so great a man was there ; and knew also the great necessities wherein I was, as having been the witness of my afflictions and comforted me in several occasions ; for her Faith was ever so great, that she could not believe, but that it was the Spirit of God, which all the rest said, was the Devil ; and she being a person of very good understanding, and of great secrecy, and one to whom our Lord vouchsafed to do great Favours in Prayer, his Divine Majesty was pleased to give her knowldg of those things, whereof they who were Learned were wholly ignorant ; My Ghostly Fathers then gave me leave, that I might ease my self in some things with her ; for she was capable many ways to understand them ; for somtimes she enjoyed some of those Favours which our Lord vouchsafed to me, together with certain very profitable advertisements for the good of her Soul. As soon as she came to know this, that I might the better treat with this Holy man (without saying any thing to me) she got leave of my Provincial, that I might remain in her House for some eight days ; and so both there, and in several Churches I spoke with him often on this first occasion of his being there ; for I communicated my affairs with him afterward divers times. Having given him an account of my life, (though yet but in brief) and of the manner of my proceeding in Prayer

Prayer ; and this, with the greatest clarity that I could ; (for, this property I ever had to treat with all clarity and truth with them, to whom I imparted my Soul ; even to the having the first motions of my heart made known to them ; and the more doubtful and suspitious things I still was wont to argue against my self with the strongest reasons I could bring,) so that I imparted my Soul to this Father, without any manner of duplicity, or concealment at all : Almost at the very first I found that he understood me by experience ; which was indeed the only thing whereof I had need at that time ; for, then, I could not so well understand these things, at least so far as to express them. For, since that time, it hath pleased our Lord to enable me to understand, and to declare the favours which his Divine Majesty doth me ; but formerly it was necessary for me to find one who had passed through the same things himself, if he meant perfectly to understand me, and declare to me what every thing was. Now, this Father gave me very great light ; for at least in the Visions, which were not Imaginary, I could by no means understand what it might be : And me thought also, that I understood as little of those others, which I saw with the eyes of my Soul how they could be ; for, as I said before, those only, which were visible by our Corporeal eyes, seemed to me to be indeed valued ; and of these I had received none at all.

This holy man gave me light in all ; and declared it to me ; and bad me not be troubled, but bless God, and be so very sure, that it was his Spirit ; that, though it were no Article of Faith, yet nothing could be more certainly true, nor which I might more firmly believe. And he comforted himself very much with me, and shewed me all courtesie and favour, and ever after had great care of me, and communicated his affairs and businesses with me. And finding that I had the self-same desires of those things which he had already put in practise, (for indeed, in as much as concerned desires, our Lord had given them to me with great resolution) and finding also that I was so full of courage, he took particular contentment to treat with me. For, whosoever our Lord brings one to this State, there is no joy or comfort which can be equal to the meeting with some such other person, to whom our Lord hath given some beginnings of the same ; for then perhaps I had not much more than a beginning, by what I may be able to conceive ; And God grant that I have it yet. He had very great compassion of me. He told me, that one of the very greatest afflictions upon earth was that which I had endured ; Namely, the opposition and contradiction of good men ; and that there was much

behind ; because I had always need of help, and there was none in that City who did understand me. But that he would speak with my Ghostly Father, and to one also of those others who afflicted me most, which was that married *Cavalier*, of whom I spoke before. For he, as being a person who loved me perhaps more than the rest, made all the war upon me ; and he was a man of a tender and holy Soul ; and considering how lately before he had found how wicked I was, he could not rest secure.

The holy man *Fray Pedro* did as he said ; for he talked with those two persons aforesaid, and shewed them causes and reasons why they should assure themselves, and disturb me no more. My Ghostly Father needed little, the *Cavalier* so much, that this did not altogether suffice, though yet it were a means to keep him from terrifying me so much as he had done. We agreed that I should write to him the success I had from thence forward, and to recommend one another much to God ; for so great was his humility, as to make some little account of the prayers of this miserable Creature which gave me confusion enough. But he left me with extream comfort and joy, and directed me to proceed securely on with my Prayer, and to mакeno doubt at all, but that it was of God ; and that, whensoever I might be in any doubt, for mine own greater security, I should impart whatsoever occurred to my Ghostly Father ; and that then I should account my self safe. But notwithstanding I could not rest entirely secure, because our Lord was pleased to guide me still by the way of fear ; so that I believed it was the Devil, when they would tell me that it was so. And thus indeed none was able to cause in me either fear or security, so as to make me yield more credit thereto than our Lord was pleased to infuse into my Soul. So that howsoever this holy man did comfort and quiet me, yet did I not so entirely believe him, as to remain without any fear at all ; especially when our Lord sometimes left me in certain troubles of mind, which I shall now relate ; yet howsoever, (as I was saying,) I remained much comforted. I could not then satisfie my self with giving humble thanks to God, and to my Glorious Father *S. Joseph*, who (as I was apt to think) had brought *Fray Pedro* thither ; for he was Commissary General of the *Custodia* of *S. Joseph* ; to whom as also our *B. Lady*, I used to recommend my self much.

It hath happned to me sometimes (and so it doth also still, though not so often) to find my self in so excessive trouble and afflictions of Mind, together with extream torments and pains of body from violent diseases, that I knew not which way to turn my self. Other times I have

have been subject to corporal miseries yet more grievous ; but not finding with them such sorrows of mind, I passed through them with much alacrity. But when they came both togeather, the misery of it was so great, as that it oppressed me exceedingly. As for those great Favours which our Lord had done me, I then forgot them all ; there only remained such a kind of memory of them, as of a thing which I had dreamt ; and this served to give me so much the more pain. For, the Understanding grows stupid, and dulled in such sort, as that it made me enter into a thousand doubts and suspicions, as thinking I had not formerly understood things well ; and that perhaps I followed fancies in stead of truths ; and that it was enough for me to be deceived my self, without seeking to abuse and cozen so many good men ; and I seemed to be so very wicked, that me thought all the mischiefs and Heresies which have lately risen, were for my Sins. This is a false kind of humility, which the Devil invented on purpose to disquiet me, and try if he could bring my Soul to despair. And I know so well by experience that this is a work of the Devil, that now when he finds I understand him, he torments me not so often herein as he was wont. It is clearly discerned by the restlessness and disquiet wherewith it begins ; and by the tumult which it causeth in the Soul all the while it lasts ; and by the obscurity and affliction which it puts into it ; and by the dryness and indisposition to Prayer, or to any good at all ; for it seems to stifle the Soul, and to bind the Body, so that it is profitable for nothing ; where as true Humility,) though the Soul know it self to be wicked, and is in pain to consider what we are ; and we frame to our selves huge aggravations of our wickedness, as great as hath been said ; and they are truly and thorowly perceived by us) comes not with any tumultuous disorder ; nor doth it disturb the Soul, nor obscure her, nor cause her any aridity ; but rather it comforts her, and behaves it self in a quite contrary way, with gentleness, suavity, and Light. Such a pain as on the other side comforts her, to see, how great Favour our Lord imparts to her in letting her feel that pain, and to consider how well employed it is. She sorrow for whatsoever she hath done against God ; But on the other side, his Mercy chears and dilates her heart ; she hath light, wherewith to put her self to confusion, and to praise his Divine Majesty for vouchsafing to endure her so long. But in this other Humility which the Devil brings, there is no light for any thing which is good ; but it seems as if God were ready to put all the world to fire and sword : He represents the Divine Justice to the Soul, and though she hath faith in Gods mercy, (for the Devil hath no such

Such power, as to destroy that) yet believes she this in such sort, that it is no comfort to her; but rather when she beholds God's great mercy, he makes it serve her for so much the greater torment, because she seems to have been thereby obliged to more.

This is an invention of the Devil, of the most painful and subtle, and disguised that I have heard of; and therefore I would advise your Reverence that (if perhaps he may tempt you hereafter in this kind) you may have some Light, and may know him, if he leave you understanding enough for doing it: for believe not that learning and Knowledg will serve the turn; But though I want enough of that, yet now, when I am rid of that fancy, [I understand very well all his foolery; And I understand also that our Lord is pleased to have it, and permit it; and allows him leave to do this, as he did, that he might try and tempt Job; though, because I am so wicked, he permits not that it be done to me with so much rigour.

This hapned to me once, and I remember very well, that it was upon the day before *Corpus-Christi Eve*, (a Festivity, to which I am much devoted, though yet not so much as were fit) and at that time it lasted with me but one day, but at other times, for a week and a Fortnight, yea and somtimes three weeks, and I know not whether more, especially in the Holy Weeks which were wont to be my Regalo in point of Prayer. Methinks he surprizeth my Understanding at an instant, by certain things somtimes so very trivial, that, at other times, I would but have laughed at them; and then he makes it stoop to whatsoever he lists; and the Soul remains as it were chained to it, without being Misstris of her self, or able to think of any thing, but those impertinencies which the temptation represents; and indeed, which have no substance at all; neither do nor undo, but serve only to choak the Soul in such sort, as not to suffer her to manage her self. And so it is, that it hath hapned to me somtimes to conceive that the Divels go playing with a Soul, as men would do with a Ball; and she the while without any meanes at all to deliver her self out of their power. Nor can it be expressed how much she suffers in this case. She walks about in search of some recovery; and God permits that she finds none. She ever remains with the Power of her Free-will, though yet not clear; I mean she is, as if she had her eyes shut, and as some person who hath gone very often by some way, though it be night and dark, yet by the marks which he hath formerly taken, knows where he may be in danger to stumble, because formerly he hath seen the same paths by day, and so secures himself from that danger. In like

like manner doth the Soul for the not offendg God ; she which now seems to proceed meerly by custome : for, I speak not hear of that help which our Lord affords her, though that be the thing which imports most. Faith is then deaded, or laid asleep, as the other vertues also are ; though yet it be not utterly lost ; for she well believes that which the Church teaches, and she pronounces it also with her mouth; yet, on the other side, the Devil doth so press and dull it, that she seems to have but such a kind of knowledg of God, as of a thing heard afar off. Her Love also is so Luke-warme, that, if she hear God spoken of, she harkens in such sort, as to believe he is that which he is, because the Church declares it ; but she hath utterly lost all memory of whatsoever she hath experimented of him in her self. For her to go and pray, or remain in Solitude, is but to increase her affliction ; for, the torment which she feels in her self (and yet without knowing why) is an unsupportable thing ; in my opinion it is a kind of pattern of Hell. This is most certainly so, as our Lord himself was pleased to give me to understand once in a certain Vision. For here the Soul doth burn her self up within her self, without knowing, either by whom, or by what way she is set on fire, or how to escape from it, or how to quench it ; for, as for seeking to help her self by reading, she profits by it no more than if she could not read at all. It hapned to me one day to read the Life of a *Saint*, so to see if it would season me, and to comfort my self with the consideration of what he had suffered, and so I read half a dozen lines of it four or five times over, and yet, though all were written in *Spanish*, I understood them less in the end, than I did in the beginning, and so I gave it over. This hath hapned to me many times, but I more particularly remember this one.

To apply ones self to conversation with any, is yet worse : for, the Devil fills us then with such an untoward and harsh kind of spirit of anger, that it seems to me, that I have even a mind at least to eat folks up as it were, and that I can do no otherwise : yea & me thinks I acquit my self well in that I forbear to do any thing farther, or God also shews him, who is in this case a particular favour in preserving him then from saying or doing somwhat against his Neighbours, whereby he might prejudice them and offend God. As for going to my Ghostly Father, it is certain, which I shall here relate ; and it hath hapned to me very often : That, notwithstanding they were so holy with whom I have dealt, and yet deal ; they then uttered such harsh words, and chid me after so sharpe a manner, that, when afterward I took occasion to repeat them in their own hearing, themselves were amazed at

themselves ; and told me it was not in their power to do otherwise : For though they fully resolved within themselves not to do it, and at other times had not only compassion of me, but even a kind of scruple also to treat me thus, when I was so full of affliction both in Body and Mind ; and though they had resolved to comfort me with much compassion and pity, yet they could not do it. Not that they gave me ill language, I mean so, as to offend God by it, but they would use words as full of disgust, as could possibly be endured from Confessors. But, belike, they intended to mortifie me ; which though at other times I was glad of, and could bear, yet then all grew to be torment. Sometimes I came also to be of opinion that I deceived them ; and I went to them, and advised them in very good earnest that they should take heed of me, lest I deceived them. I knew well enough that I would not do it on set purpose, nor tell them a lye ; but I was afraid of all things. One perceiving this temptation of mine, advised me not to be troubled at it ; for, though I had a mind to cosen him, yet he had wit enough not to suffer himself to be troubled, which gave me great comfort.

Many times, and as it were, most ordinarily, I used to have some quiet and respite after I had Communicated ; and sometimes in approaching to the *Blessed Sacrament*, at the very instant I should grow so perfectly well, both in Body and Soul, that it amazeth me. For, it seemed to be no other thing than that all the darknes of my Soul is dispersed and discharged in an instant, and that upon the rising of the Sun, I quickly came to discern those fooleries, wherein I was engaged.

At other times, by the hearing of some one word which our Lord spake to me, and with only saying, *Be not afflicted, be not afraid*, (as formerly I have related) I remained most perfectly well ; and sometimes by seeing some Vision, I became as if I had ailed nothing. I entertained and regaled my self with God ; and lamenting my self with him, for his permitting me to suffer so great torments, though I must confess that he made me very good amends, because these difficulties did never use to arive, but afterward were received a great bundance of Favours. And me thinks the Soul comes like gold, more refined and pure out of the Crucible, for to see our Lord within her self, and then are those troubls accounted little, though they seemed insupportable before. And one desires to return again to suffer them, if our Lord may be served the better by it. And though we have yet greater tribulations, and persecutions provided, that they be without offend-

offending our Lord; Nay rather with rejoicing, in suffering them for him, all in the end brings more profit; though for my part I did never bear them as I ought, but very imperfectly. At other times troublgs came upon me in an other kind, and do come still, so as that me thinks I am deprived of all possibility of thinking then on any thing which is good, or of so much as desiring to do it; for that I have both a Body and a Soul, which is utterly useless and burdensome. But at those times I am not subject to those other temptations and disquiets, but only to a disgust in all things, though I know not why, so that nothing can give contentment to my Soul; I procure to divert and employ my self in the performing of some good works in the exterior way, to busie my self even half whether my self would or no, and I know well how little any Soul can do when Gods grace is hidden from her. This put me not to any trouble, for the beholding mine own baseness after this manner gave me a kind of satisfaction.

At other times I find my self so, as that I am utterly unable to frame any distinct or formed conceit of God, nor indeed of any good thing after a staid manner. Nor can I then put my self in Prayer, though I be alone, though I feel that I know God; and I find it is my Understanding and Imagination which do me hurt in those occasions; for my Will me thinks stands right in me, and disposed to all goodness. But this understanding of mine is so entirely lost, that it seems to be some mad Fool whom no body is able to bind; nor am I so far Mistres thereof, as to make it quiet for one *Credo*: Somtimes I laugh at my self, and know my own misery, and stand looking upon this power, and let it alone to see what it will do; and God be thanked it never, which is strange, applys it self to any thing that is ill, but only about things which are indifferent; if there be any thing to be done, either here or there, or any where else. I come then to know better the exceedg great favour which our Lord is pleased to do me when he holds this fool bound in perfect contemplation. And here I consider what it would be if such persons as esteem me for good, should diserne me in this dotage and distraction.

Very great compassion have I done the Soul, to see her in so ill company. I would fain see her rather in liberty; and expres my self in this manner to our Lord: *When, O my God, shall I arive to see my Soul all united in celebrating thy praise; that all the Powers thereof may enjoy thee? Permit not hereafter, O Lord, that she be thus divided into pieces:* for now it seems no otherwise than as if every piece were running a several way. These things pass thus many times, and I understand

stand very well that sometimes the little corporal health I have contributes much to these inconveniences. I also reflect much upon the hurt which the first Sin did us ; for me thinks it is grown from thence, that we are incapable to enjoy so great a good ; and mine own sins are part of the cause ; for if I had not committed so many, I should have remained more entire, and confirmed in good.

I underwent also another very great affliction ; for, conceiving that I understood all the Books that treated of Prayer, which I read, and that already our Lord had given me that of which they speak, so that I needed them not ; for this reason I did not read them, but only the *Lives of Saints* ; where finding my self also very short in that, wherein they had so heroically served God, this seemed to do me good, and encouraged me ; but me thought this was a sign of little humility for me to think that I was already arived to this degree of Prayer. And not being able to perswade my self otherwise, I continued much in pain, till certain learned men, and particularly the blessed Fray pedro de Alcantara bade me not be troubled at it. I see very well, that in the serving God, I have not yet begun ; though the way which his Majesty hath taken in doing me Favours, is the same which he hath used towards such as are good ; And that I am a meer imperfection, unless it be in my desires, and in loving him ; for in this I see well that our Lord hath favoured me, that so I may in some little thing serve him. I confess, me thinks I love him ; but my actions, and the many imperfections which I discern in my self give me great discomfort.

At other times my Soul falls into a kind of dozedness (for so it is) when me thinks I do neither good nor ill, but follow the road as they say, of other folks ; and this, neither with pain nor glory, nor with thought of life or death, neither with delight nor trouble ; yea, me thinks she feels nothing at all, but seems to me to go on like some little Ass, who feeds and sustains himself, because they give him somwhat to eat, and he eats almost without thinking what he is doing. For the Soul in this state is not likely to be without feeding upon some great Favours of God, since she is not troubled at living in so miserable a life as this, but passes through it with patience and equality of mind ; yet no motions or effects are perceived in such sort as that the Soul understands her self by them. It seems now also to me to be like sailing at Sea with a soft and gentle gale of Wind, when we ridd much way, yet scarce know how ; Whereas, in those other Marriners the effects are so great, that the Soul doth almost instantly discern her own im-

improvement ; for instantly do her desires boyle again, and the Soul can never satisfie her self : they to whom God imparts such impetuosityes of Love, do find from them such operations as these. Like certain little Springs which I have observed to rise, where the Sand never ceases to be moved upwards by them. This example, and comparison of Souls, which are arived to this state, seems to me very natural. For Love will be ever boylng upward, and considering and devising what to do, and cannot contain it self ; as it seems the water whereof I speake stays not in the earth, but still is casting it self up from thence : so is it very usual for the Soul not to be at quiet, nor contain her self through the love she hath ; she is so imbrew'd and filled with it, that she wishes others would drink too, (since she thereby cannot want) that so they might assist her to praise God. O how often do I call to mind that living Water, whereof our Lord spake to the *Samaritan Woman*, and therefore I am very much devoted to that Gospel : And it is true, that I was so even from my childhood, though I did not then understand this benefit as now I do ; and I often besought our Lord to bestow that Water upon me, and always I had the picture of it at hand, with this Motto when our Lord stood by the Well : *Domini da mihi
banc aquam ; Lord give me this Water.* It seems also to me like to a Fire which is very great, that needs matter continually upon which to work, to the end it may not be extinguished : So also are those Souls whereof I speak, how dear soever it may cost them, they would be bringing wood still, that this fire may not go out. For my part, I am such a wretch, that I would be content if I had but straw to cast on it.

And it happens to me somtimes, yea often, that one while I laugh at this, and another am much afflicted. For, a certain interieur impulse is ever inciting me to serve God in somewhat; and (since I am not fit for greater matters) to do it in adorning Images with green boughs and flowers, in sweeping or dressing up some *Oratory*, or in doing such other little things as gave me confusion to see. If I did any Pennance, it was all so little, and so poorly done, that unless our Lord should vouchsafe to accept of my good will, I saw plainly that I was of no worth, and I did even laugh at my self.

Now it gives no small trouble to such Souls, to whom it pleases God of his goodness to give this fire of his Love in great abundance, if they want corporal strength to do somewhat for him ; this is a very great pain, For, in that she wants strength to lay wood on this fire, (and such a Soul doth even dye for fear the fire should go out) it seems to

me, that the dotts even consume within her self, and turn even to ashes, and dissolve into tears, and so wastes and burns away, and this is a strong kind of torment, though it be favourly withall. Let such a Soul as this give great thanks to God, if she having arrived to this state, our Lord gives her corporal strength to do penance; or if he have imparted to her Learning, and Talents, and power to Preach, and hear Confessions, and win Souls to God. For she knows not, nor understands the great benefit possessed by her, unless she hath already tasted the affliction which it causeth, to receive much, and not be able to do his Divine Majesty any Service. Let him be ever Blessed for all, and let the Angels give him glory. Amen.

I know not whether I do well in writing of so many little things; but since your Reverence hath commanded me yet again, not to esteem it any trouble to enlarge my self, and that I should omit nothing, I go discoursing with clearness and with truth, of as much as I can call to mind. And it is impossible but that I should omit many things; else it would cost me much more time, whereof I have very little as I have said, and when all is done, perhaps no benefit accrue thereby.

CHAP. XXXI.

She treats of certain exterior temptations, and representations wherewith the Devil molested her, and of the torments he caused her. She speaks also of other things very good for the instruction of such persons as go the way of Perfection.

AS I have spoken of some interior and secret temptations, and troubles which the Devil caused me: So now I desire to speak of others, which in a sort were publick, and wherein one could not be ignorant, but that it was he, I was once in a certain Oratarie, and he appeared to me on my left side, in an abominable figure; in particular I observed his mouth, for he was speaking to me, and it was most terrible. It seemed to me, that a huge flame came out of his body, and it was all a very bright one, without any obscurity. He told me after a most hidious manner, that, howsoever I had freed my self once

out

out of his clutches; yet he would fetch me back again. I was in a mighty fear, but I blessed my self as well as I could, and he vanished away, but instantly returned; this hapned to me twice; Nor did I know what to do, only I had *Holy-water* near at hand, and I cast it towards the place where he was, and he returned no more.

Another time he was some five hours together tormenting me with very terrible pains, and both interieur and exterior disquiet, that we thought it was not to be endured. The women who were then with me, were astonished to see what passed; but neither could they tell what to do, nor I how to help my self. My custom is, whensoever any corporal sicknes, or pain is very intollerable, to make certain Acts within my self, the best I can, beseeching our Lord, that his Majesty will give me patience; and that I may continue to suffer so even till the end of the world. Therefore now when I found my self put to suffer with so much rigour, I helped my self by making some such acts and resolutions; that so I might bear it the better. Our Lord was pleased then that I should clearly understand it to be the Devil; for I saw a certain very abominable little *Negro* hard by me, gnashing his teeth like one desperate, because he lost by what he hoped to have gained; as soon as I saw him, I laughed and shewed no fear at all; for there were some persons by, who knew not what to do to me in this case, nor what remedy to apply to so great torment; the blows being so strong, which he made me give my self, both with my Body, and my Head, and my Arms. I not having any power at all to resist him, yea and (which was worse) I felt so great an inward restlessness, and disquiet, as I could by no means allay, nor yet durst I so much as call for *Holy-water*, lest I should put them in fear who were present, or let them know what the matter was. I have found by much experience oftentimes, that there is not any thing, from which the Devils fly more, so, as not to return again, than from *Holy-water*. They fly also from the *Cros*, but presently return again; certainly the vertue of *Holy-water* must be great; and for my part, my Soul finds a particular and very evident kind of comfort when I take it; usually I feel such a refreshment in it, as I am not well able to express, with an interieur delight, which comforts my whole Soul; and this is no fancy, nor a thing which hath hapned to me only once, but very often, and observed by me with much attention. We may compare it to one who were very hot and thirsty that should drink a cup of cold water, which shold thoroughly coole and refresh him. I also consider that all those things which are ordained by the Church, are of great im-

portance, and it much Regales me, that those words which the Church uses, should have so great power as to infuse it into the water, making it so very different from such other as is not hallowed. But since my torment would not cease, I told them who were present, that if they would not laugh at me, I would beg of them some Holy-water. They brought me some, and sprinkled me with it, but it did me no good; I sprinkled some towards the place where the ill Spirit was, and he went instantly away, and my malady went quite away, as if they had stroaked it off from me with their hands; save that I found myself as weary, as if I had been cudgelled extreamly. It did me great good to consider since when our Lord gives the Devil leave he is able to do such a deal of mischief to us, both in Soul and Body, even when they are not his; what he will do, when they be wholly left to his possession. This gave me a very great desire anew to free my self from so ill Company.

At another time, and that lately, the same thing hapned to me, though yet it lasted not long, but I was alone, and then I also asked for Holy-water; and two Religious Women, (who we may well believe, would by no means tell an untruth,) came in thither, after the Devil was departed, and said, they smelt a very filthy stink as of brimstone. For my part I smelt it not; but it continued so, that it might be perceived.

Another time I was in the Quire; and I fell into a great fit of Recollection; and I went away from thence, for fear somwhat might be observed: But the Religious that were near all, heard a noyse of ver-
y great blows in the place where I was; and I also heard close by me some talking together, as if they had been debating some busines, though I knew not what in particular it was; for I was in such depth of Prayer, that I understood them not, nor had I any fear.

This was almost every time when our Lord did me the favour, that some Soul or other received benefit upon my perswasion and advise; And it is certain that a thing hapned to me which I shall now relate; and there are many witnesses of it, and in particular he to whom I Confess now, for he saw it in a certain Letter, without my telling him who it was that wrote it, though yet he knew the party well enough. There came once a certain person to me, who had lived about some two years and a half in a mortal Sin, one of the most abominable, that ever I had heard of; and during all that time, he neither Confessed, nor reformed himself, and yet he said Mass; And though he then Confessed his other Sins, yet concerning that one he was wont to say

to himself, how could he ever confess so foul a thing, and yet he had a desire to free himself from it, but knew not how to effect it. I had great compassion of the man, and much grief to see God so offended; and I promised him to beseech God to give him remedy; and that I would also procure others to do the same, who were better than myself: And accordingly I wrote to a certain person about it, this man letting me know that he could convey my letter. And it so fell out, that upon the first Letter, he confessed his Sin; and God was pleased (at the instance with his Majesty, of those many other holy persons, to whom the business had been recommended) to extend his mercy to this Soul; and my self also, as miserable as I am, did not fail to solicit it the best I could. The man wrote to me, that he was reformed so far already, as that some time had passed wherein he had returned no more to that Sin; but that the torment was so great, which the temptation caused him, that he accounted himself to be in a kind of Hell; so extreamly was he put to suffer by it; and therefore that I must still recommend him to God. Upon this, I recommended him again to my *Sisters*, the Religious of our Monastery; by whose prayers our Lord was pleased to do me this Favour; for they took the matter very much to heart. This was a person of whom none could guess who it was; and I humbly besought the Divine Majesty to appease those torments, and temptations, to which he was subject; and that those Devils might come to torment me, provided that I might not offend our Lord in any thing. And it is very true, that shortly after this, I endured most grievous torments for the space of a moneth. And these two particulars which I have now related, happened at that time. But our Lord was pleased that they should leave to afflict that person any more (for so they write me word); because I had already signified to him what had occurred to me during that moneth. As for him, his Soul got strength daily, and he grew to be absolutely free; nor could he satisfie himself with giving thanks to our Lord, and to me, as if I had done somwhat therein. But indeed the opinion which he had, that our Lord did sometimes shew me Favours, was of benefit to him; for he said, that, whensoever he found himself to be much assaulted, and pressed, he used to read my Letters, and that presently thereupon he should find himself rid of the temptation. He was much amazed to understand what I had suffered, and how also himself came to be free; and I also did wonder at it; and certainly I would have suffered it many years for the seeing that Soul free. Let our Lord be praised for all; for, the prayers can do much of such as

serve our Lord, as I believe my Sisters do in this House ; but yet, because I had procured those prayers, the Devils were more enraged against me, and our Lord also permitted it for my Sins.

About this time also, one night, I thought that the Devils would have strangled me ; But as soon as I had caused store of Holy-water to be cast upon me, I saw a multitude of them desperately run away, falling headlong as it were. So frequently do these cursed Creatures torment me, and the fear which now I have of them is so very little, (by seeing that they are not so much as able to stir, unless our Lord give them leave,) that I should weary your Reverence, although it might comfort my self, if I related the particular passages. What is said already may serve to shew that the true Servants of God need to trouble themselves little at these frights which the Devils raise, to make us fear them ; and let them be sure, that every time they see, that we despise them, they remain with the less strength ; and the Soul more domineers over them. Always there remains some great benefit, which I will not here relate for being too tedious.

I will only declare what hapned to me once upon an *All-Souls Day* at Night ; for being at that time in Oratory, and having recited the *Nosturn*, and saying those very devout Prayers which are at the end thereof, according to the manner in our *Breviary*, the Devil put himself upon the Book, that I might not finish the Prayer ; I blessed my self with the Signe of the *Cross*, and he went presently away ; but I beginning again, he also returned ; I think it was no less than three times that I begun it ; and till I cast *Holy-water* at him, I could not make an end. But then I plainly saw, that some Souls went out of *Purgatory* at that instant, who belike wanted very little of their deliverance ; and I thought whether the Devil meant to hinder it. It is seldome that I have seen the Devil in any shape, but many times without Forme, as I did the Vision ; for without form one sees very clearly that he is there, as I have declared already in *chap. 27*. I will now relate this also, because it terrified me much.

Being one day in a certain *Monastery*, and in the *Quire*, upon the Festivity of the *Blessed Trinity*, and in Rapt ; I saw a great contention of Devils against Angels ; as yet not knowing what that Vision might mean. But before a fortnight had passed, it appeared sufficiently in a certain disagreement which hapned between some persons addicted to Prayer, and many others who were not so ; and there came a great deal of harm to the House where this occurred ; for the strife continued long, and it bred a much disquiet. Another time I saw a multitude

titude of them round about me; when it seemed to me that I was environed with a great Light which permitted them not to approach me. And I understood thereby that our Lord kept them from coming near me in any such sort, as to make me offend his Divine Majesty; by that which I had found somtimes in my self, I understood that it was a true Vision. The matter is, I now understand so well, how little power they have, whensover I go not against God, that I do scarce fear them at all; for their strength is directly nothing, unles they find the Souls they set upon, yield to them, and cowardly; for then they shew their power.

In the forementioned Temptations somtimes, me-thought there revived in me all the vanities and weakneses of former times, so that I had good cause to recommend my self much to God; when presently this tormented me, that I imagined now it was all of the Devil, whensover those thoughts of mine returned, till such time as my Ghostly Father quieted me. For it seemed to me, that even the first notion of an ill thought was not to approach one who had received so great Favours of our Lord. At other times it tormented me much (yea and even it torments me still,) to see my self so much esteemed; and especially by eminent persons; and that they should speak so much good of me. In this I have suffered, and still suffer much; I presently cast my thoughts upon the Life of Christ, and the Saints; and me-thinks I walk in a way very contrary to theirs; for they went through nothing but contempt and injuries: And this makes me walk with such fear, that I scarce dare hold up my head, and would be glad to be out of sight, which I never do when I am in persecutions, for then my Soul carries her self like a Mistress, whatsover the Body may feel, and I on the other side afflicted; so that I know not how these things can stand; but yet they pass in such sort, that the Soul seems then to be as in her Kingdome, and that she treads all things under her feet. This occurred to me several times, and continued many dayes, and I thought it was vertue and humility, but now I see plainly that it was a temptation; and a *Dominican Father*, a learned man, declared it to me very well. When I conceived that these Favours which our Lord doth me, would be publickly known, it was so excessive a torment to me, that it extreamly disquieted my Soul; and it came at length to that pass, that whilst I was considering the same, me-thought I could more willingly have been contented to be buried quick, than that any such thing should arive; And so when I came to have those so great Recollections and *Raps*, as that it was not possible for me to resist them

them in publicke, I remained so confounded with shame afterward, that I would have been glad not to appear where any might see me. Being once extrelym afflicted at this, I was asked by our Lord what it was whereof I was so much afraid. For that from this there could happen only one of these two things; either that they would murmur against me, or else that they would praise him. Meaning, that they who should believe it, would praise him; and they who should not believe it, would condemn me without any fault of mine, as that both these things would prove an advantage to me, and therefore I should not be troubled at it. This quieted me very much, and comforts me still, whensover I call it to mind.

This temptation proceeded so far, that I was desirous to quit this place, and to carry my portion to another Monastery, which was more enclosed than that wherein I was for the present. And I liked it also the rather, for that I had heard it extrelym praised, and besides, it was a House of mine own Order, and also very far off from my former abroad. And it was a thing which would have comforted me much, to have retired where I might have been unknown; but my Ghostly Father would not permit it. These fears did much deprive me of Liberty of Spirit; but I came to understand afterward, that it was no good Humility, since it gave me so much disquiet. And our Lord, upon that occasion, taught me this truth; that, if indeed, I were so resolved, and assured that nothing at all of mine was good, but that it was all of God, it would follow, that just so, as I was not sorry to hear other persons praised, but rather was glad and greatly comforted that God did shew himself in them; So neither would I be sorry that his works might be also seen in me.

I fell also upon another extream, and it was to beg of God (yea, and I made particular Prayer to this purpose) that, when any person should entertain a good opinion of me, his Divine Majesty would be pleased to declare my Sins to him; to the end, he might see how without any merit of mine, it pleased our Lord to do me Favours, and this do I ever much desire. My Ghostly Father bad me not to ask it. But hitherto, till very lately, if I saw any person, who thought extraordinary well of me, by circumlocutions, or as I could, I made him know my sins; and thus I conceived my self to find ease. But yet hereby they have put me into a kind of scruple, that this proceeded not in me (to my thinking) from humility, but that from one temptation grew many; for that divers persons coming to me, I seemed to my self to have couisened them all; for though it be very true that they

they are indeed deceived, if they thought, that there was any good in me, yet had I no desire at all to deceive them ; nor did I ever intend any such thing ; but our Lord for some end permits it. And so likewise I would never have imparted any thing even to my Confessors, had I not seen it to be necessary ; for I shoud otherwise have had much scruple. But now I perceive that all these little fears and troubles, and superfluities of excessive Humility do favour of much imperfection, and proceed from want of mortification. For a Soul well resigned into the hands of God is not troubled a jot more, that they should speak well of her, than ill ; if once she understand thorowly, (forasmuch as God will give her that grace) that she hath nothing at all of her self ; but let her confide in him, who imparts it that she shall know in time why he discovers it ; and mean while let her prepare her self for persecution ; for it will most certainly arive in such an Age as this, when our Lord will have it known, that he doth a person such Favours as these. For, upon one such Soul as this, there are a thousand eyes cast ; whereas there will not be one upon a thousand other Souls of a contrary make. And there is not a little cause to fear ; and this ought to have been my fear, and the other was not Humility, but Pusillanimity. For, a Soul, which God permits to be exposed thus to the eyes of the world, may expect to be a Martyr of the world ; for, if she will not dye to it, she shall dye by it.

I really see nothing in this World which seems good to me, except only that it tolerates not faults in the good ; for by detracting it perfects them. I tell you there needs more fortitude and courage, for one who is yet imperfect, to walk on in the way of perfection, than even to be instantly made a Martyr. For Perfection is not quickly gotten, unless it be by some such person as our Lord may vouchsafe that Favour to by particular priviledg. But the world discerning once, that a man begins to aspire to do well, will needs have him perfect in an instant ; and then will it presently espy any fault in him a thousand leagues off : though perhaps that which they hold to be so, be indeed a virtue ; and whilst the other, who condemns it, is wont, peradventure, to do the self-same thing from an impulse of vice, he judgeth it so in another. One must neither eat, nor sleep, nor even, as it were, draw his breath ; And the more they esteem such persons, the more apt are they to forget that they are yet in the Body ; and how perfect soever their Souls be, they still live upon Earth, and are subject to the miseries thereof, how much soever they tread it under their feet. And therefore as I say, there is need of great courage ;

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for the poor Soul hath not yet begun to go, and they would have it fly. She hath not yet overcome and mortified her passions; and yet there would in great occasions have her remain as entire and firme, as they have read of *Saints* themselves, after they were confirmed in grace. ¶ The particulars, which occur in this kind, may give one cause to wonder and praise God; and wchth al even to afflict one to the heart, to see so many Souls turn back again, which know not (poor Creatures) what shifft to make for themselves; and so I believe mine had also done if our Lord on his part had not so mercifully done all himself: And till he of his own goodness did all, your Reverence may already have seen that on my part there was nothing at all, but only falling and rising. I would I were able to express this; for I believe that many Souls herein deceive themselves, that they would fly before God gives them wings. I conceive that I have formerly used this Comparison, but it comes also very well in here; for I find, that many Souls are much afflicted upon this occasion. Whereas they begin with great desires, and fervour, and resolution to go forward in vertue (and some do even give over all for love thereof, forasmuch as concerns exteriour things) yet seeing in others who are further advanced, very excellent effects and frwts of such vertues which our Lord hath infused into their Souls; for we cannot acquire them of our selves; and observing in all those Books which are written of Prayer, and Contemplation, things prescribed us to be done the better to ascend to this dignity, which they cannot presently bring themselves to, they are discouraged and afflicted. As for example these; not to care at all, if any speak ill of us; but rather to take more contentment in it, than when they praise us; To have very little esteem of our honour; To be perfectly disengaged from kindred and friends, so as not to desire to converse with them, but rather to be weary of their company, unless they be persons of Prayer; with many other things of this kind, which must in my opinion be given by God, becaule I hold them for Supernatural blessings, and very contrary to our own Natural inclination. But let them not be troubled, let them trust in our Lord, that what now they have in desire, his Divine Majesty will bring them afterward to attain the possession of, by meanes of Prayer, and by their doing, on their part what lies in them. For it is very necessary for this weak and poor Nature of ours to have a great confidence, and not to be dismayed, nor to think, but that, if we will proceed with courage, we shall be victorious; and because I have much experience hereof, I will speak

speak a word or two by way of advise to your Reverence. For you must not think (though it may appear, as if it were so) that any vertue is already gained, unless it be first tried by that which is contrary to it; And we must alwaies be suspiciois, and not cast-off our care as long as we live. For we are presently catched, much will stick close to us; if (as I was saying before) the Grace is not as yet wholly imparted to us, to know what All is; and in this life All is never had but with many dangers.

It seemed to me some few years agoe, that not only I was not inordinately tyed to my kindred, but that I was tired with them; and it was really very true, that I could not well endure their conversation. But there occurred a certain busyness of much importance, which obliged me to remain with a certain Sister of mine, whom formerly I had loved with extraordinary affection; though now, being come again to live with her, we suited not very well together: for notwithstanding she were better than I, yet being of a different condition from mine, in regard that she was married, the conversation could not be alwaies that which I could have wished; and therefore I liked to be alone, as much as conveniently I might. But yet, after a while I found that her troubles and afflictions cost me more sorrow, by much, than those of other Neighbours; and likewise some care. In fine, I perceived that I was not so free, and untyed as I thought; and that I had still need to avoid the occasion, that so this vertue which our Lord had begun to give me, might have gotten more strength; and so I have procured through his Favour to do ever since.

When our Lord begins to bestow any vertue on a Soul, it is to be held in great account; and by no means are we to expose it to the danger of being lost. So is it in those things which concern reputation and honour; and so also in others; your Reverence may believe, that not all of us, who esteem our selves to be absolutely united from all things, are yet so indeed; and we have need enough not to be slack, or negligent herein. And whatsoever person feels in himself any point of Honour, if he mean to profit in Spirit, let him believe me and free himself from this tye; for it is such a chain, as that there is no File in the world, but God and Prayer, and very much endeavour on one part which can break asunder; it seems to be such a restraint in this way, that I am amazed to see the mischief it doth. I see certain persons who seem to be Saints by their works; for they do so many, and so great ones, that the world doth admire them; Good God! why is this Soul still upon the Earth? How is she not already at the

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very top of Perfection? What is this? Who can detain such a one as doth so much for God? Alas, this: That this Soul still retains some point of Honour; yea, and the worst of it is, that she will by no means believe that she doth so: and that, because sometimes the Devil makes her conceive that she is obliged to retain it. But let them believe me, I beseech them for the love of our Lord, that they will believe this poor little Ant, whom our Lord would have to speak it; That, unless they free themselves from this Caterpiller, though perhaps it may not destroy the whole Tree, because some other vertues will still remain, yet they will be all worm-eaten; nor will it ever be a beautiful Tree; nor will it either thrive it self, or suffer such others to thrive and prosper, as grow neer it; for, the fruit of Good-Example, which it gives, is not wholsome, or sound, nor will last long. And I say it often over, that, when there is any point of Honour to be maintained, how little soever it be, it is like the playing on an Organ, where when one point or stop is missed, the whole Musick is disordered. It is a thing which alwaies doth hurt enough to the Soul; but in the way of Prayer it is the very plague it self.

Are we procuring to joyn our selves by Union to God; and would we observe and follow the Counsels of Christ, loaden with injuries and false testimonies, and yet do we desire to hold-up our reputation and credit entire and untouched? But it is not possible for these two to arive thither, because they go not the same way. And our Lord approacheth then to a Soul, when we force our selves and procure to depart in many things from that which is our right. Some perhaps will say, I have nothing wherein, nor doth any occasion present it self. For my part I am apt to believe, that, whosoever hath indeed so generous a resolution as this, our Lord will not suffer him to lose so great a good: his Divine Majesty will provide him so many wayes for the gaining of this vertue, that perhaps he would not wish to have had so many. Let us therefore put our hands to work; for to mention here the Nothings and trifles which I did in my beginnings, or some of them, at least, (those Straws whereof I have spoken, which I cast into the fire; for, I am fit for nothing else) all is admitted, and accepted by our Lord; let him be blessed for ever.

Amongst the rest of my imperfections, this was one; I had very little knowldg of the *Breviary*, and of that which was to be performed in the *Quire*, and how to behave my self there; and this hapned by my being so careless, and given to other vanities: and the while I saw other Novices who were able to instruct me. Now I forbear to ask

ask them any questions, for fear they should perceive my ignorance. Shortly after, good example was set before me (which thing is very ordinary) and so, when God had a little opened mine eyes, I would then be content to ask even of Children whatsoever I knew not most perfectly well; and yet I lost no honour or credit by the bargain; nay it seemed to me, that our Lord afterward was pleased to give me a better memorie. I could Sing but very ill; and I was troubled when I had not well learnt what I was bidden; yet this, not because I failed in my duty before God (for, that had been vertue in me) but in regard there were so many that heard me; and thus I was so disturbed upon the meer point of honour, that I said much worse than I was able to have done. But afterward I thought it fitter to tell them plainly that I could not do that which indeed I could not do very well. At the first I had some difficulty in this; but afterward I took contentment in it. And it is true, that when I began not to care for being known to be ignorant, I performed it much better; And this base Honour hindred me from being able to do that which I esteemed an honour: (for every body places honour where, and in what he will). By these nothings, which are really Nothing (and I am sufficiently Nothing, whom such things could put to so much pain) and by little and little, by performing such poor acts, and such poor things as these (his Divine Majesty vouchsafing to give them strength, and value, as having been performed for his sake.) He helps us on towards greater things; and so did it happen to me by my seeing in matters concerning Humility, that they all profited except my self; (for, I was never good for any thing) that when they went from the *Quire*, I would stay to fold-up their *Mantles*, and me-thought I served so many *Angels* who there sung the praises of God; and still I used to do it, till they (I know not how) come to hear of it; but then I was not a little ashamed: For my vertue did not arive so far as to be content, that they might know of it; which must be not out of humility, but only, that they might not laugh at me, because these were such nothings.

O my Lord ; what a shame is it to see so great a wickedness as mine ; and find me reckon-up such poor and little grains of sand as these, which yet I raised not up from the earth for thy service ; but all was wrapt up in a thousand miseries ; for the water of thy Grace had not yet sprung and boyled up in me to exalt them. O my Creatour, that I had somthing of worth to recount, and present to thee amongst so many sins ; since I recount those great Favours, which I have re-

ceived from thee ! It is true, O my Lord, I know not how this heart of mine can endure it ; nor how any Creature, who shall ever read this can fail to abhor me, when he sees such immense Favours so ill requited ; and that I am no more ashamed to relate, in fine, these little services as all that is mine. O my Lord, I am ashamed ; but my not having any thing else to recount with any colour of being mine own, makes me mention these so base beginnings of mine ; to the end, that whosoever shall have laid his own more solidly, and have done thee greater Services, may have hope, that since our Lord hath vouchsafed to accept these in part of payment, he will certainly receive those others better, which are greater. I humbly beseech his Divine Majesty to give me grace, that I may not always stay in these beginnings ; Amen.

CHAP. XX XII.

She treats, how it pleased our Lord to put her in Spirit, into a place of Hell, which she had deserved for her her Sins. She relates what was represented to her there ; which was but a kind of shadow of such things, as are suffered in that place.

After a long time, when our Lord had already done me many of those Favours which I have related ; as others also which were very great ; I found one day, whilst I was in Prayer, though I could not tell how, that on a sudden I was placed in Hell. I understood that our Lord was pleased to let me see the place which the Devils had prepared for me there, and which I had reserved for my Sins. This lasted but a very short space ; but yet, if I should live many years, I hold it impossible ever to forget it.

The entrance to it seemed to me to be after the manner of a long and strait passage, or rather, as if it had been a low, dark, and narrow Furnace. The ground seemed to be of water as it were thickned with dirt ; both very filthy, and of a most pestilential smell, having a multitude of loathsome Vermine in it. At the end of it, there was a certain hollow place, as if it had been a kind of a little Press in a Wall ; in-

to

to which I saw my self crowded extream close. Now all this was even delightful to the sight, in comparison of what I felt there ; this, which I have said already, is very imperfectly described. But, as for that of the Feeling part, the very beginning to say what it was, is a thing which can neither be well related, nor understood : But I felt a certain fire in my Soul, which yet I know not how to declare, as indeed it was. For, all those almost insupportable torments which I have felt with all extremity in this life, and whereof the Phyſtians affirm, that even in the Corporeal way they are the greatest which can be suffered in this world ; (as namely, that shrinking-up of all my Sinnewes, when I instantly grew lame by it ; besides many other my torments in several kinds ; and some also as I have said, caused by the Devil) are all nothing, in comparison of what I felt there ; besides my knowing that this was to be without end or intermission for ever. All this is also nothing, in comparison of that continual agonizing of the Soul, that pressing, that stifling, that affliction so very sensible, togeather with that desperate and torturing discontent and disgust which I am no way able to express. For to say it is an eradication, or rending of the Soul, is to say little ; since in that case it seems that it must be some other who dispatcheth our life ; but in this, the Soul it self is the Executioner, which even tears it self in pieces. The matter is, I know not how to exprefſ that interiour kind of fire, and that unspeakable despair, transcending those intollerable torments and pains. I saw not who it was that inflicted these things ; but, me-thought I found my ſelf burnt, and cut piece-meal all at once. And I ſay that that interiour fire and despair is the very worſt of all. Whilſt I was in this moſt peſtilential place, and that without any poſſibility of once hoping for any comfort, there was no ſuch thing as ſitting or lying ; nor is there any room ; for they had put me into that place like a hole in a wall ; where thoſe very walls which are alſo moſt hideous to the ſight, do preſs their ſides cloſe to one another ; and every thing there choaks ; There is alſo no light in that place, but all is groſs darkness. I understand not how this can be ; for, with this having no light at all, yet all that which may afflē the ſight, is ſeen. Our Lord was not pleaſed at that time, that I ſhould ſee any more of all Hell ; but afterward I had another Vision of moſt fearful things, as the punishment of certain particular vices : which forasmuch as I could judg of by the ſight, ſeemed to be moſt hideous than the former ; but in regard I felt not the pain, they made me not ſo much afraid. For in this other preſent Vision our Lord was pleaſed that I ſhould really feel thoſe torments,

ments, and affliction in Spirit, as if my very Body had been suffering them there.

I know not how all this could be; but I understood well enough, that it was a very great Favour; and that our Lord was pleased that I should discern by the sight of mine own eyes, from whence his great mercy had delivered me. For it is nothing to have heard talk of it; nor that at other times I had considered several sorts of torments; (though yet I did it not often; for my Soul was not very well led by the way of fear) nor that the Devils tear men in pieces, or any other torments whereof I had read; for, all is nothing to this; Since this is wholly another kind of thing; and in brief, the torments of this world are no more than a meer Picture in comparison of the Life; and the burning which is felt in this world, but a trifle in respect of the fire there. I remained so astonished and amazed at it, and so I am even whilst I write this, though it hapned to me six years ago; And it is so, that even now in the place where I stand, the natural heat of my body seems to fail me for fear. Nor do I, in any trouble or pains ever remember what passed then; but that all whatsoever can be suffered in this life, seems nothing to me; and so also, me-thinks in part, we complain here without reason. And therefore I say again, that this was one of the greatest Favours that our Lord hath ever done me; for it hath benefited me very much, both towards the making me lose all fear concerning the tribulations and contradictions of this life; as also to give me strength towards the enduring them; and finally to render thanks to our Lord for delivering me (as now I may hope) from those perpetual and terrible torments.

Since that time, as I was saying, all seems easie to me, in comparison of one moment wherein that is to be suffered, which I endured there. I wondred, that, having so often read Books, which give an account of some part of the torments of Hell; I feared them so little, and regarded them not as I ought, and considering in what case I was then, how it was possible for me to receive contentment in any such thing as finally was to bring me to so ill a place. Be thou eternally Blessed, O my God; for how well hast thou made it appear that thou lovedst me incomparably better than I do my self? How often, O Lord, hast thou delivered me from that dark and horrible Dungeon? and how often have I returned to cast my self in thither again, even against thy will? Hence also I came to be in very great pain for the many Souls which are condemned, especially of the *Lutherans*, because they had once been Members of the *Church* by their *Baptisme*. I gained also great

great impulses to do good to Souls; so that it seems to me very certain, that, for the saving of any of them from so excessive torments, I could suffer many deaths with a very good will. I consider, that if we see a person in this world, whom we dearly love, in any great affliction, or pain, it seems, that even our natural disposition invites us to compassion; and if it be great, it afflicts us too. And therefore, to see a Soul, which is for ever to endure that supremest affliction, and miserie of all miseries, who shall be able to bear it? No heart can brook it, without great grief. And, since we are moved here to so much compassion of those, whose misery at the furthest is to end with their lives, and hath a term prefixed, whereas this other hath none, I know not how we can be at rest, considering what a huge number of Souls the Devil daily carries with him to Hell? This also makes me desire, that, in a busines of so great importance, we be not satisfied with less than the doing all we can on our part; and that we leave nothing unattempted; and I humbly beseech our Lord, he will be pleased to give us his grace for this purpose.

When I consider, that howsoever I were formerly most wicked, yet I had some little care to serve God; nor yet did I then commit certain things, which are swallowed down by the world, as if they were nothing: And finally, I endured huge sicknesses; and I did it with that great patience, which our Lord was pleased to give me for that purpose; and I was also not inclined to murmur and detract, or to speak ill of any; nay, it seems to me, as if I scarce had power to wish any body ill; nor was I covetous, nor envious, (for any thing that I could ever remember) at least so, as to offend God greatly thereby; and several other things; for though I were so wicked, I had usually the fear of God before me; and yet, notwithstanding all this, I see where the Devils had provided my lodging; and it is true, that, considering my faults, I seemed to deserve more punishment; upon the whole matter, I conclude, it was a most horrible torment; and that it is a dangerous thing, that we should take contentment here; & the Soul should take no rest, or ease, which is falling every minute into Mortal Sin: But for the love of God let us remove all the occasions thereof; for our Lord will help us, as he hath done me: his Divine Majesty vouchsafe not to fail to hold me fast in his hand, so that I return to fall; for in that case, I see already whether I must finally go for ever; I beseech our Lord, even for what his Majesty is, not to suffer it. *Amen.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

She treats of the effects, which used to remain in her Soul, when our Lord had done her any Favour ; She declares also, how we are to procure, and greatly esteem the gaining of one degree of Glory more ; and how we must not, for any trouble, or pains, forsake those goods which are everlasting.

I Am loath to recount any more of those Favours, which our Lord hath done me, than such, as I have related already ; yea and even they are too many that they should be thought to have been shewed to so wicked a Creature ; but yet to obey our Lord, who hath commanded it, and your Reverence also, who expects it ; I will declare some more things here for his glory. His Divine Majesty, grant, that it may serve for the profit of some Soul, to see that when as our Lord would vouchsafe so highly to favour so wretched a thing, as I am ; what will he not do for such as serve his Divine Majesty in good earnest ? And every one may be encouraged hereby to give his Majesty contentment, and gust ; since even in this life he vouchsafes such assurances, and pawnes.

First ; It is here to be understood, that in these Favours, which God doth to a Soul, there is more and less glory ; For the glory and gust, and comfort which he imparts, is so much more, in some Visions, than in others, that I was even amazed to find so great difference of enjoying even in this life. For it happens, that there is so great an excellency in a gust, or Regalo, which our Lord imparts in some one Vision, or Rapt, that it seems impossible to desire any thing beyond it in this life ; nor doth the Soul indeed desire more ; nor would wish for more content, though yet since our Lord hath given me to understand, how great the difference is in Heaven, between the glory enjoyed by some, and that which is enjoyed by others, I see very clearly, that even here also there are no set limits in giving, when our Lord pleases. And so could I also wish, that there were no limits set in my doing Service to his Majesty, and in employing my whole life, strength, and health upon it ; and I would not lose the least imaginable proportion of further fruition, through any fault of mine. And herein I declare my self thus far, That, if this choice should be offered me, Whether I had rather be subject to all the afflictions of the world, even till the end of it, and then ascend by that

that means to the enjoying of never so little more glory ; or else, without any affliction at all, enjoy a little less glory ; I would most willingly accept of all those troubles and afflictions, for a little more enjoying ; that so I might also understand more of the greatness of God ; because I see that he who understands more of him, doth both love him and praise him so much the more. I say not, but that I should be contented, and should esteem my self very happy to be in Heaven, though it were but in the most inferiour place thereof ; for our Lord would shew an abundance of mercy thereby to me, who had been designed to such a one in Hell ; and I humbly pray his Divine Majesty, that in fine I may go to Heaven, and that he will not cast his eye upon my great Sins. That which I say, is this, That, if our Lord would give me grace to labour much for him, and if I were able to do it, I would not upon any terms (how much soever it might cost me) forgoe the gain of any Celestial glory by my fault ; Miserable Creature that I am, who had once lost it all by my so many offences.

Here it is also to be noted, that in every Favour of a Vision, or Revelation, which our Lord did me, my Soul did still remain with some great gain ; and with very many in some Visions. For, by my seeing Christ, his admirable and excessive beauty hath remained imprinted in me ; and I have it even to this day ; for, in this case one only time serves the turn ; how much more so very many, wherein our Lord hath vouchsafed to impart this favour to me. In particular, I remained with one advantage hereby, which was extreamly considerable ; and it was this. I was subject to a very great fault, by which much hurt came to me ; that, whensoever I began to observe, that any one had a good inclination to me, and I liked him well, I grew to carry so much affection to him, as that my memory would bind me, after a sort, to be still thinking on him, though yet it were not at all with any intention to offend God ; but I would be very glad to see him, and to remember him, and to consider the good parts which I found in him ; and this was so prejudicial a thing, that it did my Soul a great deal of hurt. But when once I came to behold the great Beauty of our Lord, I saw none after that, who might seem passable in comparison of him ; nor, who was able to take-up my thought ; But that by casting the eye of my consideration upon that Image of him which is engraven in my Soul, I have remained with so much Liberty of Mind in this respect, that every thing which I have seen since that time, is loathsome in comparison of the excellencies and graces which I discerned in this Lord. Nor is there any knowledg, or any

manner of comfort, which I esteem, in comparison of that which comes by the hearing of one single word, which proceeds out of that Divine mouth of his; how much more so many. Nay, I hold it a kind of impossible thing (unless our Lord should permit for my Sins this memory to be taken from me) that any Creature can ever so possess my mind, as that I shall not instantly be free by a little recovering the remembrance of this Lord.

It hapned to me somtimes with some of my Confessors (for I alwaies love them much, who govern my Soul, in regard that I take them truly as in the place of God himself; and me thinks it is ever there, where I employ my affection most) that esteeming my self to be in lecurity with them, I would be apt to shew them extraordinary kindness; whereas they on the other side, (as being cautious and Servants of God) would be fearful, lest I should fasten, or addict my self too much to them, though in a most innocent manner; and they would shew themselves displeased at it: Now, this grew in me, after I had made my self subject to be so much directed, and commanded by them; for, before, I did not bear them so much love. I would be smiling somtimes to my self to consider how they were deceived; though I would not alwaies be telling them so plainly, how little I tyed my self to any Creature, as I was sure of it in my self: But yet, I asfured them enough of it; and, when once they were grown to be more intimate with me, they came to know how particularly I was obliged to our Lord in that kind. For these suspitions which they had of me, were always in the beginnings.

Besides, there grew to be both more love, and more confidence toward this Lord of mine, after I had seen him; as one, with whom I was come to have a kind of continual conversion. I saw, that though he were *God*, he was also *Man*; and that he did not wonder at our weakness; for, he well knows our miserable condition and composition, which is subject to Falls of so many kinds, by that first Sin of *Adam*, which he came to repaire. Although he be my Lord, I may yet treat with him, as with a Friend; because he is not like the Lords, we are wont to meet within this world, who place all their Lordlineis in some acted Authorities, and who must appoint set-times for Audience; and noted persons to speak with them. If perhaps any poor man have busines, many returns and favours, and labours will it cost him, before he can dispatch it. And if perhaps they have any thing to do with the King himself, alas if poor folks, and not Cavaliers, they must not presume to approach, but be content to ask who the Favorites are: who,

who, we may be sure are not such as tread the world under their feet ; because such persons are wont to speak real truths ; for, they neither fear, nor need fear any thing, and so are not for the Court ; For, there these things are not usual ; but to dissemble, whatsoever they dislike ; nay, scarce dare they think of doing such a thing, for fear they should come to disgrace.

O King of Glory, and Lord of all Kings ! how is thy Kingdome not set out with such straws since it hath no end ? How is there no need of third persons, to introduce us to Audience with thee ? by our seeing thy person we instantly perceive that thou only dost deserve to be called Lord ; So great is the Majesty, which thou shewest, that there is no need of many attendants and Guards, whereby thou maist be known to be King. Whereas if any Earthly King were left quite alone, he would hardly be known to be king ; and how much soever himself might desire it, yet the people would have difficulty to believe it. For in himself, he is no more than others are ; somthing must appear to make men believe that he is the King. And he hath therefore so much more reason to serve himself of these external advantages and helps ; for else, they would make no account of him ; because his appearing so powerful, depends not upon himself, but his State is derived to him from others. O thou my Lord, O my King, who is able now to represent that Majesty which thou hast ? It is impossible to forbear to see that thou art a great Emperour in thy self ; and that it doth amaze us to behold thy Majesty. But yet it puts me to more amazement, O my Lord, to see, in company thereof, the great humility, and love, which thou bearest to such a wretched one as my self, we may ever treat, and speak with thee about all things, even as we will our selves, when once we shall have lost that first amazement, and fear to see the Majesty of thy Presence ; though yet then there remains still a greater fear to offend thee, and that, not for fear O Lord, of thy punishment, for, we do not esteem that at all, in respect of the misery which it is to lose thee.

Behold here, some benefits of this Vision ; besides many other great ones, which it leaves in the Soul. If it be of God, it makes it self to be understood by the effects, whensoever the Soul hath light ; for, as I have often said, our Lord is pleased that it should remain in darkness, and not see this light ; and then it is not so strange a busines, that one so wicked as my self, may have some fears.

It is but very lately, that it hath hapned to me to be eight dayes in such a case, as that it seemed I neither had, nor could have any knowledg

ledg of what I owe to God, nor yet any memory of his Favours; but only, that my Soul was so besotted, and employed upon I know not what, nor how; Not upon any ill thoughts, but in respect of good ones, so very untoward, that I laughed at my self: and took a kind of guilt to see the baseness of a Soul, whensoever our Lord vouchsafes not to be continually working in it. She understands very well, that she is not without possessing him, even in this State; for it is not as in those great afflictions which I have said I do suffer sometimes; but, though she brings wood, and doth all that little which she is able to do on her part, there is no kindling the fire of the love of God: it is a great mercy of his, that there is discerned some smoak; for, we know thereby, that it is not dead; and our Lord returns to kindle it again afterward. But then, this Soul of ours (though we break our very heads in blowing, and weary our selves in ordering, and composing the wood) seems to be in such a condition, as that every thing serves to choak us the more. And so I think, the best then is to render her self wholly up; and to know, that she is able to do nothing of her self; and to apply her endeavours to the doing of some other external meritorious things, as I have said; for, perhaps our Lord takes away Prayer from her, that the Soul may exercise her self in those other actions, and so understand by experience, how little she is able to do of her self.

I have this very day solaced my Soul with our Lord; and presumed to bemoan my self with his Majesty, to this effect: *How comes it to pass, O my God, that it seems not enough for thee to keep me in this miserable life; and that I resolve to endure it all for thy sake; and that I content my self to be, where all is vexation, and trouble, because I may not enjoy thee; but that I must also eat, and sleep, and dispatch busyness, and treat with every one, and that I suffer all this for the love of thee; O my Lord, thou knowest, that this is an extream torment to me; and in those few little moments of time, which remain to me now, for the enjoying thee, thou yet art pleased to hide thy self after this manner from me. How is this compatible with thy mercy? and how can the love thou bearest me, permit it?* I believe, O Lord, that, if it were a possible thing for me, to hide my self from thee, as thou doest thy self from me, I think, I say, and I believe so much, concerning the love thou bearest me, as that thou wouldst not endure it at my hands. But thou art still with me; and ever seest in what case I am. This is not to be suffered, O my Lord; I humbly beseech thee to consider, that it is a kind of wrong to proceed after this manner with one who loves thee so much. This, and the like, hath occur-

occurred to me to say ; though yet considering first, how that place, which had been provided for me in Hell, was very favourable in comparison of what I had deserved. But yet sometimes the love I bear to our Lord, is so very extravagant, that I scarce can tell what I do ; and then, with all the little understanding I have, I make such complaints, and our Lord endures them all at my hands ; praised be so good a King. But now might we, perhaps, approach any King of this world with such presumptions as these ?

And yet I wonder not much, that we dare not talk after this manner, to an Earthly King, yea, or to such great Lords as are the superiors in the State, as whom we have reason to fear. But now we find the whole World so changed, that our lives should be longer than now they are ; that we might have time enough to learn the *Puntilio's*, and new modes, and fashions of good Manners now in the world, if we would also have any time to spend in the Service of God. For my part, I even bles my self to see what passeth ; the truth is, that even already I scarce knew how to live in the world, when I came to practise this. For now it passes not for a jest, when there is any little omission in treating men with much more ceremony than they deserve ; but they so really take it for an affront, that you must interpret your intention, and profess your desire to make satisfaction, if there be (as I was saying) any omission ; yea and I pray God that they will vouchsafe to believe you. I repeat it again, that really I did not know how to live ; so miserably do these things afflict a poor over-tired Soul. For she sees that on the one side, they command her to employ her whole thought upon God ; and that it is necessary for her to do so, to free her self from many dangers ; and, on the other side, she also sees that it concerns her not to omit a tittle in the *Puntilio's* of this world, upon pain of not failing to minister occasion of offence to them, who place their Honour in these *Puntilio's*. As for me, they tired me outright ; and I could never come to an end of making satisfaction ; for it was not in my power (how much soever I endeavoured it) to forbear the making many faults in this kind ; which, as I said, are not esteemed little in the account of the world. It is true, that in *Religious Orders* there is a true discharge as to these things, and that in all reason they should be excused in such kinds. But it is not so : For they affirm, that our Monasteries ought to be a kind of Court for good breeding, and to know what belongs to good Manners ; I confess I understand not this kind of language. I had thought some Saint had said that a Monastery,

nastery should be a kind of Court to instruct such, as had a mind to make themselves Courtiers of Heaven. But now, things are understood in the direct contrary way; But how they, who should be continually employed in pleasing God, and in procuring to abhorre the world, can also be obliged as much to all attention and care to please such as live in the world; and that in certain things which are every day changing, I see not. Yea, though it were possible, that all might be learned for some one time, things would presently change.

Even for the Titles which are expected upon the Superscription of Letters, it were necessary there should be a Chaire erected (as one may say) where they might instruct, and teach, how such and such things were to be ued. For somtimes men are to leave the Paper blank on one side of the page of a Letter, and somtimes on the other. And now he, who was not wont to be stiled *Worshipful*, must be called *Honourable*; and I know not, in fine, where things will rest. For, I am not yet fifty years old, and yet I have seen such changes in my time, that I cannot tell now, how to live. How then will they, who are now born, know how to carry themselves, if they chance to live long? I have really great compassion of Spiritual persons, who are obliged to live in the world for certain holy ends; for I hold it to be a kind of terrible Crofs, which they are fain to hear in this respect. If they could all come to agree in a tale, and profes themselves to be ignorant, and be content to be held for such in these arts or sciences, they might free themselves from a great deal of trouble.

But here into what kind of foolerries have I cast my self? For treating of the greatnesses of God, I am grown by degrees to speak of the baseneses of the world. Since our Lord hath done me the Favour to have left it. I am resoved to give over discoursing of it. Let them fit themselves to it, who with so much trouble to themselves, sustain and hold up these toyes; and I pray God, that we pay not dearly for them in the other life, where no change is, Amen.

C H A P. X X X I V.

She treats of some great Favours which our Lord was pleased to do her, as well in acquainting her with certain Secrets of Heaven, as by giving her other great Visions, and Revelations. She declares also the effects, which they left in her Soul; and the great benefits she obtained by them.

B eing so very ill at ease one night, that I thought fit to excuse my self from Prayer, I took a Pair of Beads, or Rosarie, to employ my self Vocally; procuring not to recollect my Understanding, though, for my exterior, I was sufficiently recollected, and retired in an Oratory. But when our Blessed Lord pleaseth, these diligences of ours serve to little purpose. For, I remaining a while after this manner, there came a Rapt of Spirit upon me, with such an excessive impetuositie, that there was no power in me to resist it. It seemed to me, that I was placed in Heaven; and the first persons, whom I saw there, were my Father and Mother; and I also saw some things besides, so very great, and all in so very short a space of time, as an Ave Maria might be said in, that I was amazed; as conceiving that it was too very great a Favour for me. In this circumstance of the times, having been so short, I may perhaps be deceived; for it may have been a little longer; but at least it seemed very short. I was afraid of an illusion; but yet to me it seemed none; I knew not what to do, for I was extreamly ashamed to go with this to my Ghostly Father; Not yet, in my opinion, in respect of any Humility in me, but because I thought it likely enough, that he would make some jest at it, and say: Oh, what a Saint Paul or S. Jerome is this woman grown, to see things of Heaven! yea, and because these Glorious Saints had such things as these, I grew to be in so much the more fear of my self; and I did nothing but weep bitterly, in regard that, in my opinion, there was no probability at all that things should pass after this manner. But yet howsoever I went to my Ghostly Father, notwithstanding all the aversion which I had; for (though most difficult and painful for me to exprefs) I never durst conceal any thing from him, through the very great fear wherein I was of being abused and deceived. When he saw me so greatly afflicted, he did procure to comfort me much; and told me many good things, to free me from the pain wherein I was.

I i After-

Afterward it hapned to me ; and the same occurs to me several times that our Lord went shewing me yet greater Secrets ; I say, he shewed them to me ; for, that a Soul shoud ever be able to see any one jot more than is represented to her by our Lord, there is no means, or possibility ; and I never saw more than meerly what he was pleased to shew me at every several time. But that was so very much, that the least part thereof, sufficed to make me remain all amazed, and my Soul to be very much improved towards the undervaluing and dis-esteeming of all things in this life. I would if I could tell, how to give some part of the least of that which I knew to be understood ; but thinking how to do it, I find it is impossible. For, though this Light which we see here, and that which is represented there, be, all of it, Light : yet still there is so great a difference, that there is no comparison. For the clarity and brightness of the Sun it self, is a mean and very obscure thing, in respect of this. In fine, the Imagination of man, how subtile and refined soever it be, cannot reach to the drawing or describing the manner of this Light ; nor yet of any other thing at all, which our Lord gave me to understand ; and that with such a sovereign kind of delight, as cannot possibly be declared. For, all the Senses enjoy such a superiour degree of sweetnes, that it can no way be fully expressed ; and therefore I think it best to say no more.

I had once been above an hour in this condition, when our Lord shewed me admirable things ; and seeming not to depart from being neer me, he spake these words, *See, Daughter, what they lose, who are against me ; and do not thou forbear to tell them of it.* But, O my Lord ; what good will my telling do them, whom their own actions blind so, if thy Divine Majesty do not give them light ? Some there be, to whom thou hast given it ; and they have profited much by knowing those greatnesses of thine ; but, O my Lord, they see them shewed to such a wretched and miserable a creature, that I cannot but esteem it a strange thing to find any one to believe me. Blessed be thy name, and thy mercy ; for at least I have plainly seen an evident amendment in mine own Soul ; since this I would be glad if I might still have remained there, and not come back to live here any more : For the contempt wherein I held this whole world was very great ; and it seemed to be no better than dung to me ; and now I find how meanly we are employed, who are detained therein.

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Whilst I remained with that *Lady*, of whom I spoke before, it hapned to me once, when I was sick of the pain at my heart

heart, (which I had then very great, as I have said, though nothing so much of late) she considering me with much compassion, commanded that one day certain Jewels of hers should be brought forth, which she had of very great value; and one in particular of Diamonds, which was prized at a very high rate: conceiving that this would recreate and revive me; but I smiled inwardly at her, and had compassion to see how mean things men esteem, when I considered what our Lord hath laid up for us; And I thought, how impossible a thing it would be for me to put any manner of value upon such toyes as those, even though I should endeavour it, unless our Lord should first deprive me of the memory of those other treasures. This kind of Favour gives so great a dominion to the Soul, that I know not whether it can possibly be understood, but only by such persons as possess it. For it is a proper and natural discharge, and untynge of the Soul from all things created; and this grows absoluteley without any labour of our own; God doth it all; for his Majesty shewes these Truths; and that so, that they remain so imprinted, and engraven in the Soul, as serves to make us see clearly, that it was not possible for us to acquire them, especially in so short a time, by any diligences of our own.

Upon this, I also came to have very little fear of Death, which formerly had been great in me; but now it seems to be a very easie thing to such as apply themselves to the Service of God. For in a moment the Soul sees her self freed out of this Prison, and placed in repose. For, this way of Gods carrying the Spirit up to shew her so excellent things in these Raps, seems to bear a very close kind of conformity with the passage of a Soul out of the Body, at the hour of Deaths; since in an instant it sees it self entirely possessed of all this Good. I omit here the consideration of those pains felt when the Soul is torn out of the Body; for we are to make little account of that; and they who love God in good earnest, and have shaken hands with all the contentments of this life, are wont to dye with more sweetnes.

It also seems to me, that these Favours did me very much good towards the bringing me into a knowldg of our true *Country*; and to see that we are meer Pilgrims here; and it is a great matter to see what passes there above; and to understand where in fine we are to live for ever: for when one goes to settle and stay for good and all in any *Country*, it contributes much towards the enduring all the incommodities of the journey, to know it is a place, where we shall be in great repose. It makes us also with ease able to consider Heavenly

things, and to procure that our conversation may be there. This is a great gain; for now the only looking at Heaven recollects the Soul; for, in regard our Lord hath been pleased to shew the Soul some glimpses of that which is there, she is induced to pause and think upon it. And somtimes it so falls out to me, that they, whom I know to live there, are these who accompany me, and with whom I solace my self, these indeed being they who seem truly alive; and those others who live here, so very dead, as that this whole world affords no company at all to me, especially when I have these impulses. All seems to me but a Dream; and all the objects of these corporal eyes of mine a jest, and toy; but that which already I have seen with the eyes of my Soul, is the thing she desires; and because she finds her self to be yet far off from thence, this is death to her.

In fine, the Favour is excessively great, which our Lord vouchsafes to that Soul, to whom he gives such Visions as these; for, they help her much in all things, and particularly in the carrying of a certain heavy Crofs which lies upon her. For, nothing satisfies her now; but every thing disgusts and checks her: And if our Lord did not permit one to forget it somtimes, (though yet one remembers it again afterward) I know not how one could live. Let him be blessed and praised for all Eternity; and I humbly begg of his Divine Majesty by that precious Blood which his own Son shed for me, that, since he hath vouchsafed that I should understand some part of these so great benefits, and in some sort, begin to enjoy them also, it may not happen to me, as to Lucifer, who lost all by his own fault. Do not permit this, O my Lord, I humbly pray thee by all that which thou art; for it is no small fear which I have somtimes; though yet at other times, yea and most usually, the mercy of God puts me in security, that since he hath been pleased to draw me out of so many sins, he will not forsake me so now, as to let me be lost. And this do I humbly pray your Reverence, that you will ever desire in my behalf. But yet me-thinks that those precedent Favours were not so great as this which I will now relate; and that for many reasons, and many blessings; and in Particular, for that great courage and strength which hath remained in my Soul upon that account; Although if any of those former be considered by it self, it is so great, as nothing else is comparable to it.

One day (it was the Vigil of Pentecost, after Mass) I went to a more remote place, where I often use to pray; and I began to read in a certain Book of this Feast, which had been written by a Carthusian.

And

And meeting there with those signes, which any Beginner^s, and Pro-
ficients, and the Perfect must have to understand, whether the Holy-
Ghost do inhabit in them or no. As soon as I had read these three
States, it seemed to me, that God, through his goodnes, did not faile
to be so present with me, for so much as I could understand. And
whilst I was praising his Divine Majesty for this blessing, I remem-
bered that when I had read the same thing formerly, I wanted very
much of this present condition; (for I then saw that I wanted it as
plainly as now I understand the direct contrary concerning my self: And thus I came to know the great Favour which our Lord had done
me), and so I began to consider the Place which I had deserved in
Hell for my Sins; and I gave great praises to God, in regard that I
saw me-thought my Soul so extreamly changed, that I could hardly
know it. Being in this consideration, there came a great impulse, or
impetuosity upon me, without my understanding the occasion there-
of. Me thought my Soul endeavoured to get out of my Body; for
now she could not possibly contain her self any longer; nor found
her self capable of staying any longer in the painful expectation of so
great a Good. Now, this was so excessive an impulse, that I could
not tell what to do with my self; and so different (to my thinking)
from those which I have had at other times; nor knew I what my Soul
ailed, or would have, it was so much altered. I leaned my self on
one side, not able to sit; for I found my natural forces began to fail
me. Being in this case, I saw a Dove above my head, very different
from them of this world; for it had not our kind of feathers; but
the wings were as of certain little shells which darted forth a huge
splendour. This Dove was much greater than any ordinary Dove;
and me thought I heard a noise, which it made with its wings; for it
was hovering about the space of an Ave Maria. But my Soul was
already in such a condition, that losing her self, she also lost the sight
of the Dove. My Spirit then grew quiet upon the entertaining such
a Guest, though so wondrous an encounter might well have disturb-
ed and frighted her. But, she beginning already to enjoy, all fear
soon vanisched, and with the joy began the quiet, she remaining in
Rapt. The glory of this Rapt was extreamly great; and I remained
during the most part of the Festival of Pentecost, so stunned, and be-
fotted, that I knew not what to do with my self; nor how to contain
so great a Grace and Favour. I neither heard, nor saw, in effect, by
reason of the excels of my interiour joy. I perceived how, from
that day forward, my Soul remained with a very great improvement,

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enjoying a more sublime love of God; and firmer vertues also than before. He be blessed and praised for all Eternity, *Amen.*

I saw also, at another time, the same *Dove*, over the head of a certain *Father of S. Dominicks Order*; save that, me thought, both the beams and the brightness of the wings did spread and extend themselves much farther; and it was given me then to understand, that he was to win Souls to God.

Another time, I saw our Blessed *Lady* putting a very white long Garment upon a certain *Graduate* of the same *Order*; of whom I have spoken formerly divers times; she told me, that for the service he had done her in helping to erect this House, she gave him that Mantle, betokening that his Soul should be defended and preserved for the future in purity, and that he should not fall into Mortal Sin. And I assure my self, it proved so; for he dyed within few years after; yea, and he did both live and dye with so great Pennance and sanctity, that there can be no doubt thereof for any thing that we are able to understand. A certain Frier, who was present at his death, told me, that before he expired, he told him, how *S. Thomas* had been with him; he dyed with great joy, and desire to be delivered from this banishment. Since that time he hath appeared to me somtimes in very great glory; and told me divers things. He was so addicted to Prayer, that when a little before he dyed, he would gladly have forborne the exercise thereof, through his great weakness, he was not able to do it; for he had many Raps. He wrote to me a little before he dyed, asking me, what course we were best to take, because as soon as he had done Mass, he used to fall into Raps, which would last long without his being able to help it. God gave him at length the reward of the great Service he had done him, during his whole life.

Of the *Retour* of the *Society of JESUS*, whom I mentioned before, I have seen some things, concerning great Favours which our Lord did him; but I will not insert them here, for fear of being too long. There hapned a great trouble to him once; for he was persecuted, and found himself greatly afflicted; and I hearing Mass one day saw *Christ* upon the *Cross*, when the Priest elevated the Sacred Host; and he spoke certain words to me, wherewith I was to acquaint him for his comfort; and others by way of prevention to him, concerning somthing that was to arive; representing to hym, how much himself had endured for his sake; and that he shoulde prepare himself to suffer. And this gave him much comfort and courage; and all hapned to him just so as our Lord had foretold.

Of

Of the *Religious* of a certain *Order*, yea, and of that whole *Order*, I have seen great things. I have seen them sometimes in Heaven, with white Banners in their hands; and as I was saying, other things of great admiration. And accordingly I have in this *Order* much veneration; for I have treated & communicated with them much; and I see that their life is agreeable to that which our Lord hath given me to understand concerning them.

I being one night in Prayer, our Lord began to utter some words to me, and by them brought to my remembrance, how wicked my life had been; they gave me confusion and grief; for although they imported not any rigour, yet they caused in me such a tender kind of feeling and grief, as even dissolve us; and we find more benefit in the knowing of our selves by one of these words, than we are able to acquire in many days by our own consideration of our misery; for it brings such a truth to be so engraven in our Soul, as we cannot possibly deny it. He represented to me also those inclinations of mine, which I had formerly entertained with so much vanity; and told me that I was to put a great value upon the desire, that he would lodge in my affection, which formerly I had employed so ill, and that he would accept thereof. At other times he bad me remember how formerly I had sometimes esteemed it for a point of honour, to go against his Honour; at other times, that I should remember how much I owed him; for that when I committed the greatest offences against him, he used to be doing me Favours. If I have any faults (which are not few) our Lord gives them so to be understood by me at those times, that it makes me as it were annihilate my self; and because I have many faults, he uses me so many times. It hapned to me, that my Ghostly Father reprehended me; and when I thought to comfort my self in Prayer, it was there that I found indeed the true reprehension.

But now, (to return to that which I was saying) when our Lord began to bring my wicked life to my remembrance, which cost me a world of tears; and when I also considered that at that time I had done no good thing in my opinion, I began to consider a while, whether he might not perhaps intend some new Favour to me; because whensoever I receive any particular Favour from our Lord, it is ordinarily after I have thus defeated and annihilated my self. And I conceive that our Lord proceeds thus with me, that I may see the more clearly how far I am from deserving them. Shortly after this my Spirit was so absorpt, that it seemed to be absolutely out of my Body;

at

at least it was not perceived that it lived in it. And then I saw the most Sacred *Humanity* of our *Lord*, in a more excessive glory than ever I had discerned before. Now this was represented to me by a certain admirable, and clear notice of his being placed in the very Bosom of his *Father*. Nor yet do I know what to say, how this was ; for it seemed to me, that without seeing, I saw my self present before that very Divinity. I remained so amazed, and after such a manner, that I think there passed some days before I was able to return to my self : and still I conceived that I had that Majesty of the *Son of God* present with me, though not like the former. This I understood well enough ; But howsoever it remaineth so engraven in my Imagination, that I cannot be rid of it for a little space, how short soever the time were wherein it was represented to me ; and this is both a great comfort, and also benefit to my Soul.

I have seen this *Vision* three other times ; and this, in my opinion, is the most sublime *Vision* which ever our *Lord* shewed me ; and it brings the greatest benefits with it. For it seems that the Soul is greatly purifed by it ; and that it doth utterly take away all strength from our sensuality. It is a vehement flame, which seems to burn up, and even annihilate all the desires of this life : For, though (God be blessed for it) I had already no inclination to vain and impertinent things, it was here declared to me, in distinct manner, that all was vanity ; and in particular, how vain all the Signories of this world be. And it is of great instruction for the raising-up of our desires unto the pure Truth. There remains a reverence of God imprinted after a certain manner, which I know not how to describe ; but it is of a very different kind from whatsoever we can acquire here. It creates also a huge amazement in the Soul to consider how she ever durst, or how any creature can presume so far as to offend such an exceeding great Majesty.

I have declared somtimes heretofore these effects of *Visions*, and such other things ; and I have also said already, that a Soul receives somtimes more, somtimes less profit ; But in this it was extraordinarily great. When I came to receive, and called to mind that incomparable Majesty which I had seen and understood to be the very same, which is in this most *Holy Sacrament*, (And many times our *Lord* is pleased to let me see him in the Sacred *Host*,) the very hair of my head stood on end ; and me thought I was even quite annihilated. O my *Lord* ! if thou didst not overshadow and hide thy greatness, who durst presume to approach so often as we do, towards the joyning of so

so filthy and wretched a thing to so high a Majesty ? Blessed be thou O Lord ; and let the Angels praise thee, and all Creatures, who dost so measure things according to our weakness, that enjoying such Sovereigne Favours of thine, thy great power doth not terrifie us from presuming to enjoy them ; we being so weak and miserable.

Me thinks it might happen to us here, as once it did to a certain Labouring man ; and this I know to be true ; who found a treasure, and the same being greater than his mind could contain, which was but low, having gotten this treasure in his power, he fell into such a melancholly, that he came by little and little to dye out of meer affliction and care, by not knowing what to do with it. Whereas, if he had not found it all together, but that some one had given it him by little and little, maintaining him with it by degrees, he would have lived more contented, than when he was poor, and it would not have cost him his life.

O thou riches of the poor ! and how admirably dost thou know how to sustain Souls ! how careful art thou, without letting them see too much at once, to shew them great treasures by little and little ! When I see so great a Majesty as thine, dissembled as it were, and disguised in so small a thing as the Sacred *Host*, so it is, that since these Visions, I am in admiration at so great a Wisdome ; nor do I know how our Lord gives me courage and strength to approach it, did not he, who hath done me, and doth me still so great Favours, fortifie me also herein ; now were it possible to dissemble the matter any longer, or cease to proclaime aloud so great wonders.

What sentiment then ought so miserable a wretch, and so loaden with abominations, as I am, and who have spent my whole life in so little fear of God, to find within her self ; to see that she approaches so great a Majesty ; when he is pleased that my Soul should behold him ? How shall this mouth of mine which hath uttered so many words against this very Lord, presume to touch that most Glorious Body of his, so full of purity and piety ? For the love which that Divine Countenance of so great beauty, tenderness, and affability discovers to us, doth more afflict, and wound the Soul, that she hath no better served him than doth that fear, and terrour which is struck in us by the Majesty she beholds in him. But what then should I feel in my self at two several times, when I have seen this whereof I speak ? Really I am about to say, O thou my Lord, and my Glo-
ry

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ry, that I have in some kind, by the great afflictions which say Soul hath felt in her self, done thee some service. Alas, I hardly know what I say, who write this scarce able to speak ; For I find my self troubled, and halfe besides my self, when I go back to bring these things to my remembrance. If this thought proceeded from my self, I might seem to have some reason for what I say ; that I had done some little thing for thee, O my Lord : But since I cannot have so much as one good thought, if thou impart it not to me, there is nothing for which I can pretend to thanks ; but I am still the trespasser O Lord ; and thou the party offended.

Going one day to receive the B. *Sacrament*, I saw two Devils with the eyes of my Soul, more clearly than if I had seen them with the eyes of my Body, in a most abominable figure. Me-thought their hornes did encompass the neck of the poor Priest ; and I saw also my Lord with that great Majesty, wherewith I have spoken, placed in those hands of that Priest, in the Hoast which he was going to minister to me with the same sinful hands of his ; (for, such they manifestly appeared to be) : and I understood that Soul to be then in the state of Mortal Sin. Now what a kind of fight must it be to behold thy Beauty O my Lord, in the mid'ſt of ſo abominable shapes ? Those Devils were as all amazed, and affrighted at thy presence, and willingly enough would have been gone from thence, if they could have gotten thy leave. This gave me ſuch an excessive trouble, that I knew not how to be able to communicate ; and I was in great fear, as conceiving that if it had been a Vision from God, his Divine Ma-jesty would not at ſuch time have permitted me to ſee the ill that was in that Soul. Our Lord himſelf ſaid unto me that I ſhould pray for him, and told me, that he had ſuffered what I had ſeen, that I might understand what power and force the words of *Conſecration* have ; and that God would not be kept from thence, how wicked ſoever that Priest were, who pronounced them ; and that I might also discern his great goodness, in not forbearing to put himſelf into the hands of his Enemy, and all for the good both of me, and of all men. I also understood ſufficiently how much more Priests are obliged to be vertuous, than other men ; and how terrible a thing it is to take this moft Holy *Sacrament* unworthily ; and how abſolute a lord the Devil is of any Soul which is in Mortal Sin. This paſſage did me a great deal of good, and gave me a moft particular knowledg of my great obligation to God ; He be Bleſſed for ever and ever.

Ano-

Another time hapned to me another thing, which amazed me extremely. I was in a certain place where a person dyed, who had lived very ill, and that many years; but during two of them, he had been sick; and in some things seemed to be reformed. This man dyed without Confession; but still it seemed not to me, that he was to be damned; though yet whilst they were preparing the Body for Burial, I saw many Devils take the Corpse, and they seemed as it were to play with it; and withall, they used divers cruelties upon it, which struck me with great terror; for they did with certain great books tear and toss it from one to another. When afterward I saw him carried to be buried with all the pomp and ceremonies which are allowed to others, I considered the goodness of God, in not permitting the Soul even of that man to be defamed, but that it should be concealed that he was an Enemy of his. I was even half stupid by what I had seen; yet, during all the time of the Office for the Dead, I saw not any Devil; but when afterward they put the Body into the Grave, there was such a multitude of them that stood within, ready to receive the Body, that I was even beside my self to see it; and there was need of no little courage to dissemble it. And I considered how those Devils were likely to treat that Soul when they exercised such tyranny over the poor Body. I would to God that this dreadful spectacle which I saw, had also been seen by such as are in Mortal Sin; for, me-thinks it must have been a great motive to make them mend their lives.

Now all this obliged me to know the more, what I owed to God; and from what he had delivered me. I was exceeding fearful, till I had imparted these particulars to my Ghostly Father, as conceiving that, perhaps, it might have been some Illusion of the Devil to defame that Soul, though yet the man was not held to be of very good life: But it is very true, that whether it were an illusion, or no, I never remember it, but it makes me afraid.

And now, since I have begun to speak of *Visions* which have relation to the dead, I will also declare some other things concerning Souls which our Lord hath been pleased that I should see. But I will speak only of few, both for brevity, and because it is not necessary; I mean, as to the receiving any benefit thereby. They told me once, that a certain man was dead, who had been *Provincial* here; but when he dyed, he was *Provincial* of another Province: Now I had communicated much with him, and had been obliged to him for some good offices which he had done me: he was endued

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with many vertues. When I knew that he was dead, I was greatly troubled at it, because I was in fear of his Salvation, in regard that he had been a Superior twenty years; which is a thing I much fear, as holding it to be a matter of much danger to have charge of Souls. And so in great trouble I went to an *Oratory*, and gave him all that good which I had ever done in my whole life, which was little enough; and so I humbly besought our Lord, that his merits might supply what that Soul needed towards the freeing it out of *Purgatory*. And whilst I was begging this of our Lord, in the best manner I could, me-thought he rose up from some deep part of the earth, on my right side; and so I saw him ascend to Heaven with very great joy. He was very old before he dyed; but now he seemed to me to be about the age of thirty years, or rather somewhat less; but with much brightness in his face. The *Vision* passed away very speedily; but yet I was so extreamly comforted by it, that the death of that man put me now to no more grief; though many others had been troubled about him; for he was very well beloved. The comfort my Soul had, was so great, that I took no care for any thing, and I could not possibly doubt, but that the Vision was true; I mean no Illusion. This hapned but fifteen days after his death; but still I was not negligent in procuring that he might be recommended to God, and in praying for him my self; save that I could not do it so heartily, as if I had not seen this Vision. For when our Lord shews me a Soul thus, and that yet I pray for it afterward, I cannot choose but conceive that it is, as if I gave an Almes to a rich man. But now I came to understand afterward, (for the man dyed very far off) that the death which our Lord granted him, was of so great edification, that it astonished all to see such knowledg of himself, and tears, and humility, as he expressed when he died.

There was a *Nun* dyed in our House about a day and a half before this occurred, whereof I am going to speak; she had been a great Servant of God: And a Religious Woman reading Lessons belonging to the *Office of the Dead*, which was recited in the *Quire* for her Soul, where I stood by and assisted in repeating the *Verficle*; in the midst of the *Lesson*, me-thought I saw the Soul rise up from the same side, as the other did; and so go to Heaven. Now, this was no Imaginary Vision, like the last; but like others, which I recounted before. Yet these be no less certain than those others which are seen.

Another

Another Religious Woman of between eighteen and twenty years old, dyed in my House: she had been always sickly, and a great Servant of God, very diligent in the *Quire*; and a very virtuous woman; I thought certainly that she should not have gone to *Purgatory* at all, in regard of the many sicknesses which she had endured, but rather, that there would have been supernumerary merits. But yet when we were reciting the *Office*, before she was buried, and some four hours after she dyed, I perceived that her Soul sprung up out of the same place, and went to Heaven.

Being one day in a *Collegd* of the Society of JESUS, with those great afflictions and troubles which I have declared my self sometimes to have had, and still have, both in Soul and Body; I found my self in such a condition, that me thought I was not able so much as to entertain one good thought. There dyed that night a Brother of the Society of that House; and I recommending him the best I could to God; and hearing the *Mass* of another Father of the Society for his Soul, I fell into a very great Recollection; and I saw him go up to Heaven with much glory, and our Lord with him; and I understood that our Lord himself by way of particular favour did accompany him.

Another Frier of our Order, a very good man, was very dangerously sick; And I, being then at Mass, was in a great Recollection, and saw that the man was dead; and that he went instantly to Heaven, without touching upon *Purgatory* at all; and he dyed at that very hour that I saw him, as I was told afterward. I wondred that he had escaped *Purgatory*; but I understood, that he having been a Religious man, and having well observed the *Vows* of his Profession, the *Bulls* granted in favour of his Order, availed him towards his exemption from *Purgatory*. I know not why this was given to be understood by me; but me-thinks it may be so, for that a man's being a Religious man, doth not consist in his Habit; I mean in the wearing it; as if that very thing did possess him of a state of more perfection, as that of a Frier is.

I will relate no more of these things; for, as I said, there is no reason why I should; though yet our Lord have done me the favour to shew me very many. But amongst all those Souls which I have seen, I have not understood of any one, which escaped the going to *Purgatory*, but only this last Father, and that holy man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, and that Dominican Father, of whom I spake before. Our Lord hath also been pleased to let me see the se-

veral degrees which they have of glory, the places being represent-ed to me, wherein they are; and I find there is a great deal of differ-ence between some and others.

CHAP. XXXV.

She proceeds in shewing the great Favours which our Lord hath done her. And how he was pleased to promise his Favour to them, for whom she should beg it; and she relates some important particulars, wherein his Majesty did her this Favour.

Being once very importunate with our Lord, that he would be pleased to give sight to a certain person, to whom I was obliged, and who was almost grown quite blind, on whom I had great compassion; and I feared, in regard of my Sins, our Lord would not hear me. He appeared to me then, as he had done at other times, and began to shew me the Wound of his left Hand; and with his right Hand, he drew out the great nail which had been fastened in it; and methought that some of the very flesh came out with the nail. It was apparent how great pain it caused; and it afflicted me much. He told me that he who had endured *this for my sake*, I should not doubt wou'd more willingly grant this Suite of mine; and so he promised me, that I should ask him nothing which he would not do; for, he knew already that I would beg nothing of him, but what was agreeable to his glory; and that he would do this, which I now petitioned. He willed me also to consider, that even when I did not serve him, I had not desired any thing of him, which he had not granted; even better than I knew how to ask; and therefore, how much more would he do it now, when he knew I loved him? and therefore that I should not doubt of this. And I think eight days did not pass, but that our Lord restored sight to that person; this my Ghostly Father knew presently. Now, peradventure this did not follow for any prayer of mine; though yet since I saw this Vision, I have remained with some certainty, that the thing was done me by the Favour of his Divine Majesty; and accordingly I have presented him my thanks, *I say who and what of glory*. Another time there was a person sick of a very painful infirmitie; which because it was of I know not what kind, I forbear to particular-

cularize here : But it was a very insupportable thing ; and he had been troubled with it two moneths ; and endured a torment by it, which did even tear him in pieces. Now my Ghostly Father went to visit him ; and that was the Return of the Collesg, of whom I spake ; and he had great compassion of the man ; and told me, that in any case, I must also go and see him ; for that he was a person to whom I might conveniently do it, in regard he was my Kinsman. I went, and had so much pity of him, that I began to beg his health of our Lord after a very importunate manner. And in this I saw clearly (by all that I can imagine) the Favour our Lord did me therein ; for instantly upon the next day he was quite well of this paine.

I was once in great trouble, because I knew that a certain person, to whom I was much obliged, was resolved to do a thing which was greatly against the honour of God and himself ; and yet he was very much bent to do the thing. My affliction for this was so great, because I knew not which way to find any remedy to make him leave it ; (and it seemed to me, that there was none.) I besought God very heartily to apply one ; But till I saw it done, I could not ease my paine. Being in this case, I went to a certain Hermitage, a little remore ; for there are some such in this Monastery ; and being in one, where was a Picture of Christ at the Pillar, beseeching him to do me that Favour, I heard a most sweet voyce speak to me, framed as if it had been in the manner of whistling : I was all in an horrour, and extreamly afraid ; and I had a great desire to hear what it said to me, but could not, for it passed fuddainly. When once my fear was gone, (which was also quickly), I remained with such a quiet and joy, and so great an interiour delight, that it amazed me, how the only hearing of a voyce, (and that with my corporal ears, and without the understanding of any word) was able to produce so powerful an operation in the Soul. I perceived thererby, that the thing which I had desired, should be done ; and so it was, that my solicitude was utterly removed in a thing which was not yet, as if I had seen it done, as it was afterward. And I related the whole accident to my Confessours, who at that time were two ; and they both were very learned men, and Servants of God.

I knew also of a certain person who had resolv'd to serve God very seriously, earnestly ; and he had used Prayer for some time ; and therein his Divine Majesty had done him many Favours ; and yet he gave over his course of Prayer upon certain occasions, which occur-

occurred to him; and he did not quit them, although they were full of danger. This put me in great affliction; because the person was one whom both I loved much, and whom I also was much obliged to love. I believe it was more than a moneth, wherein I did almost nothing else but beg of God, that he would bring this Soul back to himself. And being in Prayer one day, I saw a Devil hard by me, with certain papers in his hand, which he was tearing; and he seemed to be in a very great rage: This put me into much comfort; because I conceived thereby that my Sute was granted; and so it was, as I came to know afterward. For the Party had been at *Confession*, which he made with great Contrition; and he returned in so very good earnest to God, that I hope in his Divine Majesty, he will ever go advancing in his Service. Let him be Blessed for ever. Amen.

In this particular of our Lords bringing Souls out of grievous Sins upon my humble suite; and others brought many times to more perfection; and freeing Souls also out of *Purgatory*; and doing other eminent things, the Favours of our Lord have been so numerous, that I should both weary my self, and my Reader, if I would pretend to relate them: And this hath hapned oftner to me for the benefit of Souls, than of Bodies. This is so very well known, that it hath many witnesses. At the first, there soon grew much Scruple upon me, because I could not chuse but believe that our Lord was pleased to do divers things for my Prayer, I abstract here from his own sole goodness and mercy, which is the Principal, but there are now so many particulars, and so well known by others, that I have no regret to believe this, and I bless his Divine Majesty for the same; and it puts me to confusion, because I still find my self to be more and more a debtor: and in my opinion, it makes my desire to serve him, increase, and revives my love. And (which yet amazes me more,) those things which our Lord finds not to be convenient, I cannot, although I would, beg them of him; but that it is with so little strength, and spirit, and attention, that although I would fain force my self, yet it is impossible for me to do it in these, as in those others which his Divine Majesty bath a mind to effect; for such I see I am able to beg often, and with great importunity; and, though I carry not the particular care of them about me, yet methinks they come before me of themselves: The difference between these two wayes of asking, is so great, as I am not able to declare. For, though I aske one of these kinds of things (wherein I forbear not

not to urge my self to beg them of our Lord ; howsoever I feel no^r that kind of fervour in my self, which I do in those other, though these import mine own particular very much) yet is it but as when a man is tongue-tyed ; who although he would fain speak, yet he cannot ; and if ye speak, it is but in such sort, as that he sees they do not understand him ; whereas the other is as when a man speaks clear and plain to a man, whom he finds very willing to hear him. Or else let us say, that one of those Favours is begged as by *Vocal Prayer* ; and the other, as in *Contemplation*, so sublime, that our Lord represents himself in such sort, as that we understand that he understands us ; and that his Divine Majesty is joyed to see that we beg such a thing of him, and to do us favour. Blessed be he for ever, who gives so much ; and to whom I give so little. For what, O my Lord, doth any one who doth not even wholly undo himself for thee ? and yet, *how much, how much, how much,* and a thousand times more I might say, *how much* do I want of this ? And upon this reason I would not desire to live (though yet I have other reasons also) because I live not according to my obligation towards thee. Nay, how full do I see my self of Imperfections, and with what faintnes in thy Service ; Certainly me-thinks, somtimes I wish that I were without sense, that I might not understand so much ill of my self, as I do. I beseech him to redress it all, who knows so well how to do it.

Being in the House of a certain great Lady ; || of whom I have spoken, where I had good reason to have my wits well about me, and alwayes to be considering the vanity which worldly things carry with them : For I was very much esteemed, and very much praised ; and there were many occasions whereby I might easily have been taken, if I had looked upon my self. But I looked upon Him who hath the true sight indeed, that he would not give over the keeping me ever safe in his hands ; Here when I am speaking of having a true sight of things, I remember, and consider the great troubles which any such person, as it hath pleased God to endue with a knowledg of that, which indeed is Truth, must needs be put to, when forced to treat with others about these earthly things ; where all is much disguised & masked as our Lord himself once told me. For, many of those things which I write here, are not of mine own head, but have been told me by this Heavenly Master of mine.

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And,

|| See *Foundat.*
c. 3. *Here the*
Holy Mother
T. makes a long
digression, till
the Pa paragraph
following below,
[*I have writ-*
ten, &c.]

And, because, in all those things, wherein, after a direct and positive manner, I use to express my self by these words : *This I understood from ; or our Lord told me this ;* I find very great scruple of either adding or diminishing so much as a syllable thereof; so, whencesoever I do not expressly remember every circumstance of any thing, I am wont to deliver that always as in mine own name, Or also some things do proceed from my self : Though I do not here call any thing mine, which is good in it self ; because indeed there is no such thing in me, except what my Lord hath given me without any my desert : but I call it a thing said by me, whatever doth not come to my knowledg by Revelation.

But O my God ! and how comes it, that even in spiritual matters, we are resolved many times to understand things just according to our own opinion ; and wrested much from the true sense, as we also do in things of this world ; and we think that we must rate our profit in Spirit according to the years wherein we have had any exercise of Prayer. And it seems also, that we have a mind to put a tax upon him, who subject to none, disposeth his Gifts when he will ; and who can impart more to one in half a year, than to another in many years. And this thing I have seen so verified upon many persons, that I wonder how we can detain our selves in the least doubt thereof. But I firmly believe, that a man who hath any talent in trying and knowing Spirits, and to whom our Lord shall have given true Humility, will not be subject to this error : For such a one judged of things by the effects, and by the strong purposes, resolutions, and love of the party ; And our Lord will give such a person light, whereby he may understand it ; and by that he also discernes the proficiency and improvement of Souls ; and not by the number of years ; Because one may have obtained more in six moneths, than another in twenty years. For, as I said before, our Lord gives it to whom he will ; and commonly he doth it to such as dispose themselves best to receive it. For I see but now come to this House of ours, certain Gentlewomen, who are very young ; and yet our Lord vouchsafing to touch their hearts, and to give them a little Light, and Love (I say in a very short time, wherein he is pleased to impart some Regalo & gust to them) they do not stay and paue ; nor is any difficulty able to stop them ; but they go on, without so much as remembiring that they are to eat ; and shut themselves up for ever in a House, without any Revenue, like persons who put no manner of esteem upon their life for the love of him, who they

they know loves them. They abandon all, nor have they any will, which is their own ; nor do they understand that ever they may receive disgust by such clausure and confinement ; but all of them joyntly offer-up themselves in Sacrifice for God.

¶ And now, how willingly do I allow them to have gotten the Start of me herein ? and how ought I to be ashamed and confounded in the presence of God, to see that what his Majesty did not dispatch with me in such a multitude of years, since I began to use Prayer, and he began to do me Favours, he hath accomplished in them, within three moneths ; yea even with some of them in three dayes ; doing them also far les Favours than me. Though yet withal, his Majesty rewards them well : this is certain, that they are far from being sorry for what they have done for love of him.

To this purpose I could wish, that we might call to minde for our selves, how many years they are, since we made our Profession, and have used Prayer ; But not for to torment them, by making them turn back, who have made a great deal of way in a short time, and to get them to goe just our pace, which is to make them, who flye like Eagles (through the Favours which it hath pleased God to do them) to walk no faster than a shackled Hen ; but that we fix our eyes upon his Divine Majesty ; and, if we see these persons humble, whom we find so forward in the way of Spirit, that we should give them the reins : For certainly our Lord, who doth them so great Favours, will never suffer them to fall headlong. They commit and trust themselves in the hands of God ; (for this benefit do they reap by the truth, which Faith teaches them) and shall not we trust them there ? but must we limit and measure them by our measure, according to the meanness and straightness of our own poor mindes ? Not so : but rather, if our selves cannot arrive to be owners of those strong affections, and firme resolutions, (for these cannot be well understood, without our experience) let us humble our selves, and not condemne them ? For else, by seeming to have a care of their profit, we shall deprive our selves of our own ; & lose the occasion which our Lord gives us for our own greater humiliation, and for our better understanding, how much is wanting to us ; as also how much more those other Souls must needs be untyed and freed from worldly things, than ours are ; and how much nearer united they are to God, than we ; since his Majesty applies himself so much closer to them. I mean no more in this case; neither desire to be understood further, than that I had rather have such Prayer

as having been exercised but a short time, is found to have great effects, (which instantly appear; for it is impossible that one should be content to forsake the whole world at once, upon the only reason of pleasing God, without a mighty force of love) than such as hath continued many years; and yet never, in fine, hath made an end of resolving more at the last, than at the first, to do any thing for the Service of God, unless it be some poor little things, no bigger than a graine of Salt, which have neither weight, nor bulk, but such, as that a Bird might carry them away in her Bill. Let us not hold it for any notable effect and mortification, when a great account is made by us of doing some things for the love of our Lord, which indeed it is pitty we should understand, and value at any such rate, though perhaps we should do many of that kind. For my part, I am one of these, and am apt mean-while to forget the Favours of God continually. I say not, but that his Divine Majesty will put some value upon these little things, through his own goodness; but as for me, I should make no account thereof; nor so much as see that I do them, since they are Nothing. But pardon me O my Lord, and blame me not; for I must comfort my self with Somewhat, since I serve thee in Nothing; for, if really I did serve thee in things of weight, and moment, I would make no account of these Nothings. O happy they, who serve thee in great matters! certainly, if envying of them, and desiring to do the like, might be taken by thee for payment, I should not be far behind in pleasing thee. But my Lord, I am good for nothing; do thou give me some value, since thou lovest me so much.

It hapned lately, that by a *Breve*, which came from *Rome*, ordering that this Monastery should be uncapable of Revenue, now all here may be esteemed to be finished: It cost me some trouble to effect it; and I remained with much comfort to see things settled: When reflecting upon the difficulties which I had met with; and praising our Lord for being pleased to have partly served himself of me herein, I began to look back upon the passages of the whole busines; and it is very true, that in every one of those particulars, wherein there might be any appearance, that I had contributed somewhat, I found many faults and imperfections, and Sometimes little Courage; and oft-times little Faith. For till now, that I see it all accomplished, concerning this House, which our Lord told me before should be done, I did never determinately conclude upon believing that it would be; though yet withal, I also could not tell how

how to doubt it; Nor knew I, how all this could stand together; but it seems that many times it looked in my eye, as if it must be impossible on the one side, and yet it could not be doubted on the other; I mean, to be believed, that the thing would not be effected. In fine, I found, That our Lord himself did all the good, which was done; and I, all the ill; and so I left thinking on it, and would not call it to mind, because I would not stumble upon so many of my faults: Blessed be he, who when he pleaseth, draws good out of them all;

Am:n.

I say then, that it is a dangerous thing to go rating and measuring the year, wherein one hath exercised Prayer. For though there be Humility, yet there may remaine I know not what, as conceiving that we had deserved some thing for our pains. I say not that these years of Prayer have not their worth; and so we shall be well paid for them; but if any Spiritual person shall conceive, that, for the many years, wherein he hath used Prayer, he deserves some great Regaloes, and gusts, I hold it for certain, that he shall never attain them. Is it not enough, that he hath obtained so much Favour, that God defends him from committing such Sins as he fell into, before he was addicted to Prayer? but that now he will needs sue his Majesty for his own money, as they say. This to me seems not profound Humility; yet it may be it is: but I think it rather a boldness; since I, though having but little humility, never durst presume so far. Yet perhaps, in regard that I never did God any service; therefore I begged no such favour at his hands; whereas, if I had done any, I should have desired more than any other of our Lord, that I might be paid for my pains. I do not say, but that a Soul may go increasing by this meanes; and that God will make her amends if her Prayer have been humble; but I would fain have us forget the numbring those many years of Serving of our Lord; For all that we are any way able to do for him, is loathsome and vile, in comparison of the least drop of that blood which our Lord shed for us. And if the more we serve, the more we become his debtors, what manner of thing is this, that we should fall to begging recompences; since, if we pay a Farthing of the old debt, he returns us a thousand Ducats for it? For the love of our Lord, let us leave these judgments which belong to Him. These comparisons are always bad, even in things of this world; and what then will they be in that which God only knows? And his Majesty shewed this well, when he payed the last as much as the first,

I have written these three leaves at so many several times, and several dayes, (for I had, and have still, as I have said, so little leisure) that I had forgotten what I was beginning to say further about this Vision, which follows. || I saw

|| See that former Paragraph. [Being in the House of a certain great Lady] abrupt.

to hurt me; some Lances, others Swords, some Daggers, others very long Tucks. In short, I could not get from thence by any way or means, without danger of death; especially being alone, and not having any to take my part. Being in so great affliction of Spirit, that I knew not what to do, I lifted up mine eyes towards Heaven, and saw Christ our Lord; Not then in Heaven, but yet very high above me in the aire, who reacht forth his hand towards me, and favoured me from thence in such sort, that I neither feared all that other people, nor were they able, though they would, to do me any hurt. This Vision seemed at the first, to be without any fruit, but it hath since done me a great deal of good, because I have understood what it signified. For, I saw my self as it were in such an encounter shortly after, and knew this Vision to be a very Mappe of the world. For, all that is in it, seems to carry weapons to hurt this poor Soul of ours: as (to omit those that do not greatly serve God) Honours, Riches, Pleasures, and the like. For it is evident that the Soul is entangled in a Net, before it be aware; at least all these things do their best to ensnare us; nay Friends, Kindred, and (which amazes me more) even persons very vertuous. For, I found my self afterward so extreamly beset, and even oppressed by them: they conceiving in the mean time, that they did very well; that I knew not how to defend my self, or what to do.

O my God! if now I should relate the kindes and differences of those troubles which I had at this time, even after all that whereof I spake before, how might this serve for a sufficient instruction to make one utterly abhor all things here? It was, me-thinks, the greatest persecution of all that I had endured. I found my self, I say, at some times, so straightly beset on all sides, that I only found remedy in lifting-up mine eyes to Heaven, and calling upon God. I remembred very well what I had seen in this last Vision of mine; and it did me a great deal of good towards the not putting confidence

dence in any ; for there is no one firme and stable but God alone. Now, in these great afflictions our Lord hath ever used to send me some person or other, who in his name might lend me his hand ; as he signified to me that he would ; and as he did also let me see in this last Vision, without tying my self to any thing, but only to please our Lord ; which hath sufficed me to sustain this poor little vertue which I had in desiring to serve him. Be thou O God Blessed for ever.

Being once very unquiet, and troubled, without being able to recollect my self ; yea, and engaged in a battel, and interiour conflict, my thoughts being dispersed upon things which were not very perfect ; and withal not seeming to my self to be so utterly untryed from all things as I used ; when I saw my self so wicked, I grew afraid that the Favours which our Lord had done me, might prove Illusions ; and, in fine, remained with a very great obscurity of mind. Being in this affliction, our Lord began to speak to me, and bad me not be thus disquieted ; but that, finding my self in that case, I might understand thereby, how great a misery I were in, if once he should depart from me ; and that there was to be no security at all, as long as we live in this Mortal flesh. I was also given to understand how well our labour was employed in this war and contest, since it would not fail to be crowned with so high a reward. And me thought our Lord was sorry for us who live in this world ; and that I must not think that he had forgotten me ; yea, that he would never leave me ; but yet so, as that still I must also do my part. And this did our Lord declare to me, with a kind of tender compassion and Regalo, and with certain words wherein high Favour was done me, which I need not stand here to relate. And these other words which follow his Majesty, hath said also often to me with demonstration of great love : *Thou shalt now be mine ; and I am thine.* And those words which I am ever wont to say (and to my thinking, I say them with much truth) are these, *What care I, O my Lord, for my self, but only for thee ?* But I confess these words of his, and Regaloes are yet withal to me an excessive confusion, when I remember what I am : So that it seems (as I think I have otherwhiles said, and at present sometimes tell my Confessor) there needs more courage for the receiving of these high Favours, than even for the enduring of the greatest afflictions. When this happeneth, I in a manner forget all my good works ; and then it is only represented to my mind, how wicked I am ; and that without

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out any discourse of my understanding; so that even this also doth seem at certain times somewhat Supernatural.

Sometimes there come also upon me such vehement and anxious desires of receiving the *Blessed Sacrament*, that I know not whether they can be expressed to the full. It hapned to me one morning that it rained so extreamly, as to seem no way fit for me to go out of doors. Being gotten abroad, I was so far transported through that desire of *Communicating*, that although they had set Lances against my Breast, me-thought I could have passed through them all; and how much more through water. As soon as I came to the Church, I was taken with a very great Rapt. For, me-thought, the Heaven was open, and not by one overture only, as I had seen it at other times; I saw there a Throne which hath been represented to me heretofore, (as I have told your Reverence;) and above that, another also, upon which I understood (by way of a certain notice, which I am not able to exprefs) the Divinity did reside, though yet I saw it not. Me-thought it was upheld by certain living Creatures; and I was considering whether they were not those of the *Evangelists*. But yet I neither saw how the Throne was seated, nor who was sitting on it; but only a very great multitude of *Angels* about it; which seemed to me, of much more beauty than those others which I had seen in Heaven. And I have been thinking whether they might not be *Seraphins*, or *Cherubins*; for they are very different from others in glory; and they seemed to be mightily inflamed. The difference is great, as I have said: and the glory which I then felt in my self, can neither be written, nor spoken; nor is any one able to conceive it, but such as have been partakers of it. I understood that all that which possibly can be desired was there united, yet I saw nothing;; they told me (yet I know not who) that the thing which I could there do, was to understand that I could understand nothing; but see from thence the direct Nothingnes of all things, in comparison of that. And it is true, that my Soul was afterward ashamed and confounded to observe that it was able to stay, or pause at all upon any thing created; and how much more then to be affected by it, or to it. For, all seemed to me no more than an Ant-Hill. I Communicated, and staid out the Mass; though I knew not how it could be so. I conceived the time very short; and wondered when the Clock struck; and I found that it was two hours wherein I had remained in this Rapt and glory.

I was amazed after this, to know how by approaching to this Fire, (which seemed to come from above, out of the true love of God ; for, how much soever I desired it, and how earnest soever to procure it, though I would defeat, and even destroy my self for it) it was in no power of mine, to get the least spark thereof, but only when his Majesty is pleased to impart it, seems to be consumed the old man of faults, and lukewarmness, and misery, as I have read the *Phenix* is, out of whose ashes, when she is burnt, springs another. For just so doth a Soul become another kind of thing, with desires wholly different, and with a courage so great, that now she seems not to be what she was before ; but begins to walk with a new kind of purity, in the way of our Lord. And I beseeching his Majesty, that it might prove to be so in my case, and that I might now at least begin a new to do him service, he spake these words to me : *Thou hast made a good Comparison ; and see that thou forget it not ; that so thou maist ever procure to improve thy self.*

Being once in the self-same doubt, whereof I spake even now, whether these Visions were of God, our Lord appeared, and spake these words to me with some rigour : *O ye Sons of men, how long will you continue to be bard of heart ?* And he willed me to examine my self well upon this one Interrogatory : *Whether I were entirely given to him for his, or no ; and that if I were given so, and was so, I should believe that he would not suffer me to perish.* I afflicted my self much upon his uttering that exclamation, when he returned with great tenderness and Regalo, and told me, that he would not have me afflict my self ; and that he knew already that I, for my part, would not fail to apply my self wholly to that which might be for his Service ; and that so he would also do all that, which I desired of him against illusions (and so he was pleased to do that thing in particular, which then I begged at his hands) that I should look upon the Love which went increasing daily in me ; for thereby I might perceive that the Devil had no part in it ; and that I must not think God would consent that the Devil should have so much power over the Souls of his Servants, as to be able to give me such a clarity of understanding, together with such a repose of mind, as I possessed. And he made me also further understand, that since so many, and such persons had told me, that it was of God, I should do ill if I did not believe them.

Being also another time reciting S. *Athanasiu's Creed*, of *Quicunque vult*, &c. I was given to understand the manner how there was

one only *God*, and three *Persons*; and this in so perspicuous and clear a kind, that *I* was no less comforted than amazed at it. This also did me very much good for encreasing my knowledg, concerning the greatness of God and his wonders; and when I think of the most Holy *Trinity*, or hear speech thereof, me-thinks I conceive how all that Mistery stands very well; and it contents me much.

One day, upon the *Assumption* of our *B. Lady*, the *Queen* of the *Angels*, our *Lord* was pleased to do me the Favour in a certain *Rapt*, that her Exaltation to Heaven was represented to me, together with the solemnity and joy of that Celestial Court, wherewith she was received; as also the place which she held. To tell what kind of thing this was, I am no way able. The glory which my Spirit had, to see that hers is so great, was extrem; and I remained with great effects and improvements by it, in the desire of undergoing yet greater afflictions; and it also increased my desire to serve this *Lady*, since her merit was so great.

Being one day in a *Colledg* of the *Society* of *JESUS*, and the *Brothers* of that House being then receiving the *B. Sacrament*, I saw a very rich Canopie over their heads; and this at two several times; when others Communicated I saw it not.

CHAP. XXXV I.

She proceeds in the same Discourse, relating the great Favours which our Lord shewed her. And so ends the Discourse of her Life.

Being once in Prayer, the delight and gust which *I* felt within my self, was so great, that being unworthy of so high a Favour, *I* began upon that occasion to consider how much more *I* had deserved to posses that place in Hell, which was prepared for me; for (as *I* said) *I* never forgot in what manner *I* had seen my self there. And now, by means of this consideration, my Soul began to be so much more inflamed, that my Spirit grew to be in *Rapt*; and so, as *I* know not how to express it. For, me-thought *I* was put and plunged into that Majesty, which *I* had formerly understood. In this Majesty *I* was given to understand a certain Truth, which is the accomplishment of all Truth; *I* know not how to relate it: For *I* saw nothing, these

these words were said to me, though yet I saw not who spake them ; only I knew that it was the same Truth ; This which I do for thee, is no small matter ; but a thing, for which thou oweſt me much ; because all the mischief's which befalls the world, proceeds from not knowing the Truths of Scripture with clear truth ; one tittle thereof shall not faile. Now, as for me, I conceived that I had always believed this ; yea, and that all the faithful also believed it. But then, he said to me again : Ah Daughter, how few love me according to Truth ! for, if they did, I would not conceal my secrets from them. Dost thou know what it is to love me according to Truth ? It is, to know that all is a Lye which is not acceptable to me. Thou shalt see this clearly (which now thou dost not understand) by the profit which thy Soul shall get. And so accordingly I have seen it performed, our Lord be praised. For, all things which are not addressed to the service of God, do of late seem to me so hugely to be vanity, and a lye, that I am no way able to expres it, as I understand it, and the compassion which I have, to see men live in so great obscurity and ignorance of this truth ; by this I was benefited in many kinds, whereof I will here relate some ; for many I cannot.

Our Lord said to me here a particular word of very great favour ; though I know not also how this was : For I saw nothing ; but I remained in such sort after it, as I know not also how to declare with exceeding great fortitude, and a firme purpose of accomplishing even the least part of Divine Scripture with all my power. And nothing me-thinks could offer it self to me, through which I would not pass for the making this good.

There remained also a truth of this Divine Truth, which was now represented to me (though without my knowing how, or what) so deeply engraven in my heart, that it makes me carry a new kind of reverence to God. For it imparts a notice of his Majesty, and Power after such a manner, as cannot be described ; I can only understand that it is a mighty kind of thing. I remained with a very great desire never to speak, but of things really true ; and which advance beyond all that, which is treated of here in this world. And so I began to find it pain enough to live in it. This vision left me with a great tenderness, delight, and humility. It seemed to me that our Lord did give me in this Vision much, though yet without my understanding how ; I had no suspicion at all that it was an Illusion. I saw nothing ; but yet I understood the great benefit which is in not making account of any thing which brings us not nearer to

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God ; and so I understood what a thing it is for a Soul to walk in Truth, in the presence of the same Truth. That which I understood is, that our Lord gave me to understand, That he is very Truth it self. All these things which I have mentioned here, I understood sometimes by their being spoken to me ; and at other times without speech ; but yet some of this latter sort with more clearness than those others which were imparted to me by words. I understood very great truths of this Truth ; and better than if many learned men had taught me ; at least it seems to me, that they could by no means have so imprinted them in my minde, nor so clearly have given me to understand the vanity of this World. This truth of which I speak, was Manifested to me to be Truth in it self ; and to be both without beginning, and without end ; and all other Truths, to depend upon this Truth ; and all other Loves, upon this Love ; and all other Greatneses, upon this Greatnes ; though yet all this be delivered by me with much obscurity in comparison of that clearnes wherewith our Lord was pleased to impart it. And how very well doth the power of this Majesty appear in leaving in so short a time, so great a gaine, and such things as these imprinted upon the Soul ! O my Greatnes, and Majesty, what dost thou, O my Omnipotent Lord ? Consider who it is, to whom thou do'st such Sovereign Favours ? Dost thou not remember how this Soul hath been a very Abyssie of Lyes, an Ocean of vanities ? and all this through mine own fault. For, notwithstanding that thou gavest me an inclination, which naturally did abhor lying, yet I made my self apt to treat in many things after a lying and deceitful manner. How can this be endured O my God ? and how can so great goodness and favour of thine be compatible, and sliued to one who hath so ill deserved it ?

Being once reciting the *Hours of the Divine Office* with all the rest of the *Religious*, my Soul began to be suddenly recollected ; and it seemed to me, that it was like some clear and pure Looking-Glaſs, without having any thing either on the back, or on the sides ; or above, or below, which was not all exceeding clear ; And in the very Center thereof, Christ our Lord was repreſented to me just as I am wont to see him. It seemed to me, that I saw him clearly in all the parts and portions of my Soul, as in a looking-Glaſs ; and so also (though I know not how) this Glaſs was all engraven, or set in our Lord himself, with such an enamoured communication of himself, as I cannot expref. I know that this Vision hath been of
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very great benefit to me every time that I remember it ; and especially after receiving the *B. Sacrament*. It was given me hereby to understand, that the being of a Soul in mortal Sin is to cover this Glass with a great Cloud, and make it become very dark ; so that, though our Lord be ever present with us (yea so present, as that he gives us our very being thereby) yet then he is not so represented or seen in us ; And that, when any turn *Hereticks*, then the Looking-Glass is as it were directly broken, which is far worse than to be obscured. But now there is a very great deal of difference between my seeing it, and my relating it ; for it is no easie thing to give it well to be understood. Yet this hath done me a great deal of good, and hath affected me with much pity and grief, for those times wherein my self did obscure my Soul in such sort, as not to behold this Lord of mine. This Vision seems very useful to persons of recollection, to teach them a way of thinking of our Lord as in the most interiour part of their Soul ; which is a consideration that will stick closest to them, and much more beneficial than if He were considered as out of the Soul, according to what I have said else-where ; and it is contained also in some Books which are written of *Prayer*, and where we are to seek God. In particular, the Glorious S. *Augustine* speaks of it, that neither in the open streets, nor in pleasures and contents, or any publick place where he sought God, he found him so well as in himself ; and this is very evidently the best way ; nor have we need to go to Heaven, or further off, than to our very selves ; for this will but weary the Spirit, and distract the Soul, and do us nothing near so much good.

I will advertise one thing here, if any one have any such thing, which happens in a very great Rapt ; when the time is past, wherein the Soul remains in Union, so that the Faculties thereof are wholly held absorpt ; (which lasts as I have said, but a little while) the Soul remains still recollect, and is not able as to the exterior, to return to it self ; but those two Faculties, the Memory and Understanding remaine as with a kind of frensie, and much dozed. This, I say, happens sometimes ; and especially in the Beginnings. And I have been thinking whether it may not proceed from this, That our natural weaknes cannot bear so great force of Spirit, by which the Imagination is much weakned ; I know that this happens to some. Now I think it were good to force themselves in such cases as this to leave off their Prayer for that time, and recover that afterward which they lose then ; that so all come not together ;

for it may prove an occasion of much hurt. And this is sufficiently experienced, as also how secure a course it is, to consider how much our health can endure. In all things, there will be need of experience, and a Master; for, when once a Soul is come thus far, many things will occur, which have need to be treated of with some Director. And if any such cannot be found, when sought for, our Lord will not be wanting to them, since he would not be wanting to me, I being what I am. For I believe there are few, who have attained to the experience of so many things; and if there be not experience, it is in vain to prescribe any remedy which will not rather serve to disquiet and afflict the Soul. But our Lord will take even this also for a payment; and therefore it will be best that they confer thereof, (as I have formerly said; as also all those things whereof I am speaking now, but that I do not well remember it) and I see, this imports very much, especially if they be women with their Ghostly Father; and that he be such a one. For there are many more women than men, to whom our Lord imparts these Favours; this I understood from the holy man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara* (and I have also seen it my self) that they proceeded and profited much more in this way, than men do. And he gave excellent reasons for his opinion, which need not be inserted here; all in favour of women.

Being one time in Prayer, there was suddenly represented to me (but without my seeing any thing formed; and yet it was a representation made with all) how all things are seen in God; and how he holds them all in himself. To know how to set this down, is not in my power; but it remained deeply imprinted in my Soul; and is one of the great Favours that hath been done me by our Lord; yea, and one of those also, which put me to greatest confusion and shame, when I considered the sins which I had committed against him. I believe that if our Lord had been pleased to let me see this Vision at some other time; or if they could see it, who offend him, they would never have the heart and courage to do as they do. It appeared to me, I say; but so as I cannot affirm that I saw any thing; yet somewhat me-thinks must needs have been seen by me, since I am able to make this comparison; but this by so subtle and delicate way as that the understanding is not able to reach it; or else, that I have no skill in these Visions which seem not to be Imaginary; and in some of these there may be somewhat of the Imaginary, only the Powers of the Soul, being then in Rapt, are not able afterward to assigne

assigne any Forme, in what manner our Lord represents himself to them there; and how he is pleased that they should enjoy him. Let us suppose the Divinity to be as some very bright Diamond, much bigger than the whole world; or else as some Looking-Glaſs, after the manner that I said before of the Soul in that other Vision, (save that this is in so sublime a manner, that I am not able to express it) and that all that, which we do, is seen in this Diamond; it being such as to comprize all things within it, because there is nothing which can get out of that greatness. It was a thing extreamly amazing me, to see in so very short a time, so many things joyned all-together here in this bright Diamond; and also matter of extream compassion and grief, for (every time that I remember it) to see that things so very ugly and foul as my sins were, should be represented and shewed in that so great clearnes of light. And the truth is, that whosoever I remember it, I know not how I can endure it; and I did then remain so extreamly out of countenance, and ashamed, that me-thought I could not tell where to hide my head. O that some or other were able to make this Truth to be well understood by those who commit very dishonest and filthy sins; that so they might come to know that they are not hidden; and that God hath reason to be very sensible of those wrongs, since they are acted so truly in the presence of his Divine Majesty; and that we carry our selves with so base an irreverence before him. I saw here also how justly Hell is deserved by any one Mortal Sin; because it is past our power to understand what a most heinous crime it is to commit it in the presence of so great a Majesty; and what an unspeakable distance is found between that which he is, and that which our Sins are; and his Mercy appears hereby so much the more, since notwithstanding that we understand all this, he yet endures us. It hath also made me consider, that if such a Vision as this can leave the Soul so extreamly astonished and amazed, what will the *Day of Judgment* prove, when this Majesty of God will shew it self clearly to us; and when we shall see the offences which we have committed. O my God! what blindnes is this which hath seized me? I have often been amazed, reflecting on this which I have written; and your *Reverence* may wonder how I am able to live, whilst looking upon these things, and considering my self. Let him be eternally blessed, who hath endured me so long.

Being once in Prayer, in very great recollection with much suavity and quiet, me-thought I was all encompassed with Angels, and
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very near to God ; I began to beseech his Divine Majesty for the Church. And I was given to understand the great good which a certain *Order* should do the world in these latter times ; and the great courage wherewith the Members thereof should defend and uphold the Faith.

Being once Praying near the *Blessed Sacrament*, there appeared to me a certain *Saint*, whose *Order* was in some decay. He had a great Book in his hands, which he opened, and willed me to read certain Letters in it, which were great, and very legible ; and they said thus : *In future times this Order shall flourish, and have many Martyrs.* Another time, being at *Matins* in the *Quire*, six or seven persons were represented to me ; (who appeared to be of the same *Order*,) with Swords in their hands. I conceive that thereby was given to understand that they should defend the Faith. For, being in Prayer another time, and rapt in Spirit, me-thought I was in a very spacious field, where many were fighting, and they of this *Order* did fight with great fervour. They had faces beautiful and much inflamed ; and they did beat multitudes of men down to the ground, and killed others ; This battel seemed to be against *Heretics*. I have seen this Glorious *Saint* divers times ; and he hath told me some things, and given me thanks for the Prayers which I make for his *Order* ; and hath promised to recommend me to our Lord. I specific not the several *Orders* here, lest others should be offended at it ; if our Lord please to have them known, he may declare them. But every *Order* should procure, or every particular man of every *Order*, that by his means our Lord would make his *Order* so happy, that in so great necessity, as that, wherein the Church is at this time, they might be able to serve him. Happy are those lives which are spent in this cause.

A certain person desired me once to pray to God that he might understand whether it would be for his Service that he should take a *Bishoprick*. I did so ; and our Lord made me this answer, after I had Communicated : *When he shall understand with all truth and clearnes that true Dominion consists in possessing nothing, then he may take it.* Giving thereby to understand, that whosoever is to be a Prelate, must be very far from desiring or seeking it, at least from procuring it.

These Favour, and many other also have been, and art still verily ordinarily shewed by our Lord to this sinful Woman ; which methinks are not necessary to be related ; since by those which are delivered

livered already, my Soul and the Spirit which our Lord hath given me, may be understanded. Let him be ever blessed who hath had so great care of me.

He told me once by way of comforting me, that I should not afflict my self (and this with most tender love) for that in this life we could not possibly be alwayes after the same manner; but that somtimes I should have fervour, and other times be without it; Somtimes with unquietnes and temptations; and somtimes in quietnes and peace; but that I must hope in him, and fear nothing.

I was one day thinking whether it were not a kind of being tyed to Creatures to take contentment to be with such persons, with whom I communicate the matters of my Soul, and to love them; and others also whom I find to be so great Servants of God, that I comforted my self with them; he told me, " That if a Sick man who is in danger of death, thinks a Phyſitian to have restored him to health, it would not be a vertue to forbear to thank and to love him. And what should I have done, if it had not been for such as they? That the Conversation of the good never did harm; but that my words must ever be well weighed and holy; and therefore I should not leave treating with them; for it would prove rather beneficial than hurtful. This comforted me much; for somtimes it seeming to me too great an addition to creatures, I desired wholly to give over any converse with them. Our Lord did ever counsel me in all things so far as to tell me how I should carry my self towards the weak; and some o-thers also; and he never lays the care of me aside: But somtimes I am troubled to see how little I can do in his Service; as also to see that I am forced to spend more time than I would, upon so weak and wasted a body as mine is."

I was once in Prayer, and the hour of our going to rest was come, and I found my self in great pains, and then was to have my ordinary Vomiting; and observing my self so tyed-up, and the Spirit on the other side, desiring to have some time for it self, I began to be greatly afflicted, and to weep much; (and this hath happened not only once, but as I say very often) so that it caused such an indignation against my self, as that me-thinks I do in those times heartily abhor my self; though most-what it be true withal, that I do not abhor my self indeed; nor yet am wanting in what I see is necessary for me; and I pray God that I take not more care of my self than I should; for so I fear I do. Whilst I was in this affliction, our Lord appeared to me, and regaled me very much; and told me, that I must do these things

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for love of him, and endure all ; That my Life was necessary, yet ; And so me-thinks I never see my self in any great pain which I value, since I resolved to serve this Lord and Comforter of mine, with all my power. For though he permitted me to suffer a little, yet he so comforted me withal, that I esteem not my self to do much in desiring to suffer afflictions for his sake. So that now me-thinks there is no reason why I should live, but only for this ; and accordingly this is the thing which I beg with most affection of God. Somtimes I say to him with my whole heart, Lord, either to dye, or to suffer ; I beg no other thing of thee for my self. It comforts me to hear the Clock strike ; for so me - thinks I draw a little nearer to the seeing of God, since one hour more of my life is past. At other times I find my self in such fort, that I neither relish my life, nor yet me-thinks desire death, but remain with a kind of tedium and darkness in all things ; for as I have said, I have many times great troubles. And since our Lord was pleased that those Favours should be publickly known, which his Majesty vouchsafed to shew me (as he himself told me some years agoe that they should be ; which gave me affliction enough, and to this day it is not a little that I have endured therein, as your Reverence knows ; for every one understands them as he lists) I comfort my self that it hath not been by my fault ; because I never spake of any such thing, but either to my Ghostly Fathers, or others, who I knew by them, had understood thereof : For of this I was very wary, even to extremity ; though this not so much out of humility, as in regard that I had difficulty enough (as I have said) to tell even my Ghostly Father thereof. Now glory be to God, howsoever there be some who murmur at me very much, and peradventure with a good zeal : Others are afraid to treat with me ; yea and even to Confess me ; and others say also many other things of me. But since I understand that it hath pleased our Lord to reduce many Souls by this means (as I have seen clearly) and remember continually how much himself would endure for the gaining of one Soul, I take very little care of any thing. I know not whether partly this may not be because his Majesty hath put me into this little Corner, where I am so well shut up ; and where I thought there would be no more remembrance of me, than of a thing which was dead. But their forgetfulness is not so great as I wished ; and so I have been constrained since to speak, somtimes with some persons. Yet since I am not now, where the world may easily see me ; it seems that our Lord hath been pleased to drive me to the Port ; which I trust in his Majesty, will prove a safe one.

Since.

Since now I am out of the world, and in the company of few (but they holy persons) I look down as from an high place, and I care very little what they either say or think. I would make much more account, that any one Soul should have profited never so little in God's Service by my means, than of all which can be said of me. For, since I am here in this place, our Lord hath been pleased that all my desires terminate in this. And he hath also given me even a kind of sleep in this life, which makes me think that what *I* see, is but my dreaming; nor am I able to say, that I perceive in my self either much contentment or trouble. If some things give me any, it passes away with so great speed, that *I* even wonder at it; and it leaves such an Impression, as a thing whereof *I* had dreamt. And it is a perfect truth, that although I should afterward have a mind either to be glad at any contentment, or sorry at those afflictions; it is no more in my power, but just as any man who were discreet, may receive either trouble or joy from a dream. For now our Lord hath been pleased to awaken and free my Soul from that which by my not being mortified, nor dead to the things of this world, made me to resent such things; his Majesty is pleased now that *I* become blind no more.

In this fort, Sir, do I live now; and I beseech your Reverence, my good Father, to begg of God that he will either take me to himself, or give me means to serve him. His Majesty grant that what I have written here may be of some benefit to your Reverence; I have not done it without some trouble, in regard of the little leisure and conveniences which I had. But happy shall this trouble be, if I hit right in any thing said; and if our Lord may receive some one only Act of praise by occasion thereof; for I shall esteem my self hereby fully paid, though your Reverence should burn it all immediatly after: yet I could not wish that this should happen till those three persons had seen it, of whom you know; since they are, and have been my Ghostly Fathers. For, if the thing be bad, it is meet that they lose the good opinion which they have of me; and if it be well, they are good and learned men; I know they will perceive from whence it comes, and will praise him who hath spoken it by me. May his Majesty ever keep your Reverence, and hold you in his hand, and make you so great a Saint, that you may with Spirit and Light illuminate this miserable Creature who hath so little of the humble, and so much of the bold, as that she hath presumed to write of such high things. God grant that I have not erred therein, whil'st my ayme and desire was to do my best, and to obey; and that our Lord might be praised in som-

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thing by my means : which is the Suite I have made to him now these many years ; and since I have wanted works for this purpose, I have adventured and presumed to put in order this irregular and confused Life of mine ; though yet without bestowing on it any more attention, or time than what was necessary for writing it : And so setting down those things which have occurred concerning me, and passed in me with all the plainness and truth that I was able. Our Lord vouchsafe, since he is so powerful, that if he will, he can ; to grant that I may in all things arrive to this performance of his holy will ; and permit not that this Soul be lost, which his Majesty hath been pleased by so many arts and ways, and so many times to deliver out of Hell, and to draw so near to himself ; *Amen.*

A Letter written by the Glorious S. Teresa to her Ghostly Father, who had commanded her to write her own Life, for as much as might concern her manner of Prayer, and the Favours which our Lord had shewed her ; which Letter she sent to him, together with the Book it self.

THe Holy Ghost be always with your Reverence, *Amen.* It would not be amiss to exaggerate to your Reverence this Service of mine, the more to oblige you to take particular care, to recommend me to God. And this I could well do, since it hath cost me so very dear to see my self thus set down in writing ; and to have brought by occasion thereof, so many miseries to my remembrance ; though I can affirm with truth that I have had more reluctance in declaring the Favours which our Lord hath done me, than the offences which I have committed against his Divine Majesty. I have done what your Reverence hath commanded me in the enlarging my self in this Discourse ; yet upon condition that your Reverence will also do what you promised me, in tearing whatsoever you should dislike. I had not finisched the reading it over, after I had written it, when your Reverence sent for it ; therefore it may very well be that some things are ill declared ; and others twice repeated ; for the time I have had, hath proved so little, that I could not review what I had written. I beseech your Reverence to correct it, and to command it to be transcribed,

scribed, if it must be sent to *Father Avila*; for else, perhaps some may know the hand. I desire very much, that such order may be taken that he may see it; since I began to write it with this intention. For, if he judgeth that I go in a good way, I shall be very much comforted, there remaining on my part no more to be done. Your Reverence do in all things, as you shall think fit; and consider that you are obliged to one that trusts her Soul in your hands after so confident a manner. As for yours, I will recommend it to our Lord all the days of my life; and therefore make great haste to serve his Majesty to the end you may be able to do me a favour with him; since your Reverence will easily see (by that, which is here sent you) how well you are employed in bestowing your self wholly (as your Reverence hath already begun) upon him, who gives himself to us without any reserve at all. Let him be blessed for ever; for, I hope in his mercy, that both your Reverence, and my self shall see our selves one day, where we may discern more clearly the great mercies he hath been pleased to shew us both, and may praise him to all Eternity, Amen.

This Book was finished (the first time) in June, in the year of our Lord God, 1562. It was written then without distinction of Chapters; but afterwards was written by this glorious Saint again, and divided into Chapters; and many things also were added by her, which hapned afterward; and particularly, that which concerned the Foundation of the Monastery of S. Joseph at Avila.

F. Lewis de Leon Doctor

To the READER.

With the Original of this Book came to my hands some Papers, writ by the H. Mother Teresa de Jesu ; wherein, either for her Memory, or for giving account to her Confessors, she had set down things God had spoken to her ; and favours he had done her ; besides these contained in this Book, which I thought good to annex to it, because they were of much edification. Whereupon I have put them down punctually, as the Mother wrote them ; who speaks thus.

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ADDITIONS.

Our Lord said this, one day, to me. *Thinkest thou Daughter,* that Merit consists in enjoying? No. It is only in working, suffering, and loving. You never heard that S. Paul enjoyed the joys Celestial, save once; but that he suffered oft. And you see my whole Life full of suffering; and only once, on Mount Tabor, hear of my joy. Think not, when you see my Mother holding me in her Arms, that she enjoyed those delights without grievous torment; from the time that Simeon spoke those words, Luk. 2. *Tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladius:* Thine own Soul shall a Sword pierce through; *My Father gave her clear light to see that I was to suffer.* The great Saints that lived in the Deserts, as they were hereto guided by God, did great Penance; and besides had huge conflicts with the Devil, and with themselves; passing long time without spiritual Consolation. Believe it Daughter, that, whom my Father loves best, he afflicts most; and his Love is proportioned to their Crosses. Wherin can I express it to you more than by desiring for you what I did for myself? Behold these Wounds, your sorrows will never equal these. This is the way of Truth. Therefore (since you know this) you will help me to bewail the Perdition which those of the world run into; all whose desires, cares, and thoughts, are buried in seeking how to take a contrary course.

When I began that day to apply myself to Prayer, I felt such a violent pain of my Head, that I thought it almost impossible to be able to attend it. Our Lord said to me: *By this you may see the reward of suffering;* for, since you wanted health to speak with me, I have spoken to you, and caressed you. And it is certain, that for about an hour and half I was recollect; in which space he spoke to me the fore-mentioned words, and all the rest; neither could I mind any thing else, nor knew well where I was; and I had so great joy, that I cannot express it, and my head was well, at which I much wondered, and I extreamly desired to suffer. He bad me also often call to mind the Words he spake to his Apostles, that *The Servant ought not to be above his Lord,* Mat. 10.

One Palm-Sunday, after I had communicated, I was in a great Rapt, so that I could not swallow the Host; and keeping it in my mouth,

mouth, I really thought when I came a little to my self, that my mouth was all full of Blood : and it seemed that both my Face and Body were all covered therewith, as if our Lord had then shed it; me-thought it was warm, and the sweetness I then found was excessive ; and our Lord said to me, *Daughter, I would have my Blood profit thee ; and fear not, lest my mercy should fail thee : I shed it with great pain, and you enjoy it with much delight, as you see, I abundantly reward the contentment you offered me to day :* This he said, Because it is above Thirty Years that I have used to communicate on this Day, if I could ; and procured to prepare my Soul to entertain our Lord : for, me-thought it was great cruelty the Jews shewed after so solemn a reception, to let him go so far to eat ; and I made account that he was to tarry with me, though this too bad a Lodging, by what I can call to mind. So I made some gross considerations, which our Lord I suppose accepted : for, this is one of those Visions I hold for most certain : and thereby I have been much more devoted toward the Communion.

I had read in a Book, that it was an imperfection to keep curious Pictures, and so I desired to quit one which I had in my Cell. And, even before I read this, I thought it more Poverty to have none, but of Paper ; so, after I had read it, I had no other. And I heard our Lord say this which I am about to relate, when I thought nothing thereon ; *That this was no good Mortification : for, which was better, Poverty or Charity ? Since then love was best, whatsoever excited me thereto, I was neither to quit it my self, nor forbid it my Nuns ; that the Book spoke of superfluous adornings, and curiosity in Pictures, not of the Picture it self. That, that which the Devil laboured with the Lutherans, was to deprive them of all means of exciting Affection ; and so they went on to destruction. My faithful ones (Daughter) ought now more than ever, to practice contrary to what they do.*

Being once musing with how much greater purity one lives, when retired from business ; and that when I am engaged therein, I go amiss, doubtless, and commit many failings ; I heard these words : *It cannot be otherwise, Daughter ; endeavour you always in every thing to have a right intention, and to be disengaged, and look at me, that what you do, be conformable to what I did.*

Thinking what should be the reason I had of late almost never any Rapt in publick, I heard this : *It is not expedient now ; you have credit enough for that which I intend ; let us consider the weakness of the malicious.*

Being one day in fear, whether I were in the State of Grace or no,

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He said to me, Daughter, Light is far different from Darkness; I am faithful; none shall perish without knowing of it. He will deceive himself, that presumes on Spiritual Favours; the true security is the Testimony of a good Conscience. But let none think he can of himself remain in Light, as neither can he hinder the natural Night from coming on; for this depends on my Grace. The best remedy that can be had for retaining the light, is to know that the Soul of it self can do nothing, and that all comes from me; for, though she be in light, that moment that I depart, Night comes. This is true Humility for a Soul to know what it can do, and what I. Forbear not to write the Adviees that I give you, lest they be forgotten, since you would put in writing even those of Men.

On S. Sebastians Eve, the first year that I was Prioress in the Monastery of the Incarnation, as the Quire was beginning the Salve Regina, I saw in the Prioress's Seat (where our Lady's Picture was set up) the Mother of God descend with a great multitude of Angels, and place her self there: Me-thought I then saw not the Picture, but our Lady her self. She seemed to me somwhat to resemble the Picture the Countess of Osorno gave me, though it was but a little space I had to compare them, being suddenly in a great Trance. Me-thought that over the Arch-work of the Seats, and over the supports before the Seats, were many Angels, though not in a corporeal form; for, the Vision was an Intellectual one. She continued thus all the time of the Salve, and said to me: You did well to place me here; I will be present at the Lauds, which they shall render my Son, and will present them to him.

As my Confessor one Evening went away hence in great hast, urged by some necessary occasions, I remained for some space in heaviness and melancholly, and since no earthly Creature seemed to hold me affected to it; I then had some scruple, as fearing lest I began to lose this liberty. This happened in the Evening: next Morning our Lord answered me to this, saying: I should not wonder; for, as Mortals desire company to communicate their sensual delights, so the Soul desires (when there is one that understands her) to communicate her Spiritual joys and afflictions; and is sad at having none to confer them with. Now, because he staid some time with me, I remembred that I had told my Confessor how such Visions pass speedily; whereupon he said to me, That there was a difference between these, and Imaginary Visions; and that in the favours he doth us, no certain rule can be kept; for, sometimes it is most convenient one way, sometimes another.

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One day, after receiving, I thought I saw most evidently, that our Lord placed himself nigh me, and began to comfort me with great kindness ; and amongst other things, said to me ; *seest thou me here, Daughter, that it is I ? shew me thy hands :* and me-thought he took them, and put them to his side, and said : *Behold my wounds ; thou art not without me ; finish the short course of this Life.* By some things which he told me, I understood, that, after he Ascended into Heaven, he never Descended on the Earth to converse with any, save in the most Holy Sacrament. He told me, that, at his Resurrection, he Visited our Lady, because she had great need ; for the former sorrow had so pierced her, that she returned not presently to her self to possess that joy ; and that he staid a good while with her, because it was necessary.

One Morning, being in Prayer, I had a great Rapt, and me-thought our Lord elevated my Spirit near unto his Father, and said to him : *Her, whom you gave me, I give you :* and me-thought he took me near him. This is not a thing Imaginary, but done with a very great certainty, and a subtilty so Spiritual, as cannot be expressed. He spoke to me some words which I now remember not ; some were about doing me favours. He detained me with him for some space of time.

As soon as I had communicated on the second day of Lent, at St. Josephs in Malagon, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me (as he is wont) in an Imaginary Vision ; and whil'st I was looking on him, I saw that instead of the Crown of Thorns on his Head, in all that part (which I believe they had wounded) he had a Crown of excessive Splendor ? I, being much devoted to this Miftery, was exceedingly comforted, and began to think what a huge torment it must be that had made so many wounds, and was troubled at it. Our Lord bad me not gyreve for those Wounds, but for the many that Men now gave him. I asked what I could do to remedy this : for, I was resolved for any thing. He answered me, *It was now no time for rest ; but that I should hasten the erecting of these Housses ; for, in the Souls of those Monasteries he took repose.* That I should accept as many as they offered me, because there were divers, who for want of a place, did not serve him ; and that the Monasteries which I should found in small Towns, should be like this ; That they may merit as much by the desire of practising what ever is done in other houses : and that I should procure that all might be under the government of one Superior ; and that I should be careful, that, for matter of corporal subsistence, internal peace be not lost ; for, he would help us, that we should never want sustenance. Especially, that care

care be had of the Sick; for, the Superiores, that did not provide for, and cherish the Sick, was like Jobs Friends, that he sent this scourge for the good of their Souls; and the Superioresse put their Patience in danger. That I should write the Foundation of these Houses. I considering how, in that of Medina, I never knew any thing remarkable for writing the Foundation; He asked me What I desired to see more, since its Foundation was Miraculous? He meant that he alone effecting it, when to me it seemed impossible, yet I became resolved to put it in execution.

On Tuesday after Ascension, having been a while in Prayer, after I had communicated, I was afflicted, because I found my self distract-ed, so that I could not stay upon any one thing; and I complained to our Lord of our miserable Nature. My Soul began to be enflamed, and me-thought I understood evidently that the whole *Sacred Trinity* was present with me in an Intellectual Vision, wherein my Soul under-stood by a certain kind of representation, as a figure of the truth, that my dulnes might apprehend it, how God is *Three and One*. And also, me-thought all the *Three Persons* spoke to me, and distinctly represent-ed themselves in my Soul, telling me, that from thence forward I should see an amendment in my self in three things, wherewith each of these Persons favoured me; 1. In Charity; 2. In suffering with joy; and 3. In feeling this Charity with a great Ardor in my Soul. I understood those words, wherein our Lord *Jo. 14. Apo-*
faith that the *Three Divine Persons* will abide in a Soul *cat. 3.*
that is in a State of Grace.

Afterward I rendring thanks to our Lord for so great a favour, knowing my self so unworthy thereof, I with great passion asked his Divine Majesty why, since he would do me such Favours, did he let me go out of his hand, to have become afterward so wicked? (for, the day before I had had great sorrow for my sins, viewing them as present.) I saw here clearly how much our Lord had done on his part from my very Infancy, to draw me to himself by very efficacious means, and how all benefited me nothing. Hereupon was clearly represented to me the excessive Love, God bears to us in pardoning so great ingrati-tude, when we desire to return to him; and to me, more than any for divers reasons. It seems those *Three Persons* that I saw, which are but *One God*, remained so imprinted in my Soul, that, had it lasted so, it would have been impossible to have forborne for so long the being united and recollect with such Divine Company.

One time, a little before this, going to communicate, the *Hoast*
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being on the Reliquary ; for, it was not yet given me, I saw a kind of Dove, which moved its Wings with noise. It troubled me so, and put me into a Rapt, that with much a-do I received the B. Sacrament. All this happened to me at S. Josephs in Avila ; where also one time I heard these words : *The time shall come, that many Miracles shall be done in this Church ; it shall be called the Holy Church.* This I heard at S. Josephs of Avila, in the year 1571.

Thinking one day whether they had reason, who disliked my going abroad to found Monasteries, conceiving it better for me to be always employed in Prayer, I heard : *During this life, the gain lies not in procuring to enjoy me more, but in doing my Will.*

It seemed to me, that, since S. Paul hath spoken of Womens keeping at home (as they told me of late, though I had heard it before,) this was God's will concerning Me, whereupon he said, *Tell them they are not to follow one Text of Scripture only, but consider the rest. Are they able, peradventure, to ty my Hands ?*

Being one day, after the Octave of the Visitation, recommending to God my Brother in an Hermitage of Mount Carmel ; I said to our Lord, whether only mentally, I know not ; (for, my Brother was in a place where he was in danger of his Salvation) *Lord, if I saw a Brother of Yours in such danger, what would I not do to help him ?* Methought I would omit nothing in my power to succour him. Our Lord answered me : *O Daughter, Daughter, these of the Incarnation are my Sisters, and do you defer assisting them ? Take courage therefore ; consider, it is my desire, it is not so difficult as you imagine ; and that way that you think those other things will be impaired, both the one and the other will gain : make no resistance ; for my Power is great.*

As I was once thinking on the great Penance done by a very Religious Person, and that I could have done more, (according to the desires which our Lord sometimes gave me of doing it) had not Obedience to my Confessors restrained me ; and whether it were better for the future to disobey them herein ; our Lord said to me, *By no means Daughter ; thou takest a good and safe way. Seest thou all her Penance ? I value more thy Obedience.*

Being once in Prayer, our Lord shewed me by way of an Intellectual Vision, how a Soul is, that is in a State of Grace, in whose company by Intellectual Vision, I saw the most Holy Trinity ; from conversing therewith, was derived to that Soul, a power that over-ruled the whole Earth. I was made to understand those words of the Canicles, where

where it is said; *Dilectus mens descendit in hortum suum: My Beloved went down into his Garden:* There was shewn to me likewise the State of a Soul in Mortal sin, being without strength, just like one tyed fast, and bound, his eyes blindfolded, who though he desires to see, cannot; nor go, nor hear, and is in great darkness. I so exceedingly pittied these Souls, that, to deliver one such, any pains seemed light. Me thought that understanding this, as I saw it (which can hardly be expressed) it were impossible any could be willing to lose such a Good, or endure such an Evil.

Living in the Monastery of the Incarnation, the second year of my being Prioress, on S. Martins Octave, being about to receive, Father Fr. John of the Cross (who was to give me the B: Sacrament) divided the *Hoast* betwixt me and another Sister: I thought it was not for want of consecrated *Hoasts*, but out of a desire to mortifie me; for, I had told him that I was much pleased when the *Hoasts* were large; not but that I understood that it imported nothing to the hindering our Lords being entirely there, though in the least Particle. His Majesty said to me, *Fear not Daughter, that any one can deprive Thee of Me:* Intimating that it mattered not. Then (as at other times) he represented himself to me by an Imaginary Vision, very inferior, and gave me his Right Hand, saying, *Behold this Naile, which is a Token, that from this day thou shalt become my Spouse.* Hitherto thou hast not merited it: for the future, thou shalt regard my honour, not only as being thy Creator, King, and God, but as my true Spouse: my Honour is thine, and thine mine. This Favour wrought such an effect in me, that I could not bear it, but was as one distracted, and intreated our Lord either to dilate my Meanness, or not do me so extraordinary a Favour; for, it seemed for certain to me, that my Nature was not able to endure it. I was thus all that day much absorpt. I felt afterward a great improvement, and greater confusion and affliction, to find that I in nothing correspond to so high Favours.

Being in the Monastery of Toledo, and some advising me not to allow Burial there to any who was not Noble, our Lord said to me, *Daughter, you will mistake grossly, if you regard the Laws of the World.* Fix your eyes on Me, poor, and despised by it. Shall the great ones of the World (think you) prove great in my sight? whether are ye to be valued by your Extraction, or your Virtues?

One day our Lord said to me, *Thou always desirest troubles, yet on the other side, refusest them; I dispose things according to what I know thy will is; and not according to thy Sensuality and weakness.* Take

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courage, since thou seest how I help thee ; I desire you should get this Crown : in thy days thou shalt see the Order of the Virgin exceedingly propagated. This I heard of our Lord, about the middle of February, in the year, 1571.

Being at S. Josephs of Avila, on Whitsun-Eve, in a Hermitage of Nazareth, reflecting on a very great favour which our Lord had done me on that day, about twenty years before, there came on me an impetuosity, and great fervour of Spirit, which put me into an Ecstasie. In this great Recollection, I heard from our Lord that which I will now relate ; namely, that I should from Him bid the Discalced Fathers endeavour to observe four things ; which whilst they kept, this Order should always go on increasing ; and, when they failed herein, they should know they went declining from their Original. The first was, that the Heads should agree. The second, that though they had many Covents, there should in each one, be but few Friars. The third, that they should converse little with secular Persons ; and that for the good of their Souls. The fourth, that they should Preach more by their Works, than Words. This was in the year, 1579. And, because it is an eminent Truth, I have subscribed it with my Name.

Teresa de Jesu.

R E L A-

RELATIONS.

*Written by the Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus, for some of her
Confessors: whereby are discovered the excellencies of her
Vertues, and Prayer, wherewith our Lord endued her.*

*Nothing seems more to conduce to the raising a due estimation of the Works
and Writings of the Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus, than a brief Ac-
count concerning her Sanctity and Spirit. Whereof, because very
eminent persons have written, here the Reader is presented with what
She wrote of her self in certain Relations which she sent to her Con-
fessors; in which she speaks plainly and simply, as to persons set in
Gods stead; and which seem to comprise in brief, more than the Vo-
lume written of her Life; wherein, as in a Mirrour, is discerned the
height, and purity of this holy Soul.*

I. RELATION.

1. **T**He manner of my proceeding in Prayer, which at present I observe, is this. It is very seldom that being in Prayer, I am able to discourse with the Understanding; because the Soul presently begins to be recollect, and to remain in Quiet, or in Rapt, so that in nothing can I make use of my Senses, except only my Hearing, and this too conduceth nothing to my understanding what is said.

2. It oft befalls me, that, without my intending to meditate on divine matters, nay treating of other things, and when, me-thinks, though I very much endeavoured it, I could not use Prayer, by reason of my great Aridity, my bodily pains also contributing hereto, this Recollection and Elevation of Spirit seizeth me so suddenly, that I cannot avoid it, and I instantly enjoy the effects and benefits which

it brings with it. And this without my having had any Vision, or heard any thing, or even knowing where I am; save that, when I imagine, my Soul is lost, I see it possessed of such advantages, that, though I would toil a whole year in the purchasing of it, seems impossible for me to get; I am so exceedingly a gainer.

3. Somtimes certain very great impetuositie come upon me with a desire of being consumed for God, which I cannot resist; I seem to be about to dy, so that it makes me cry out, and call upon God; and this seizeth me with great violence. Sometimes I am not able to stand, or sit still, these anguishes do so oppress me; and this pain takes me without my procuring it, and is such, as the Soule would never be quit of, or be without, whilst it lives. And the anxieties which I have are, how not to Live, and that I Live, methinks, without hope of any remedy; since the remedy for seeing of God is Death, and this I cannot procure for my self. And besides my Soule conceives that all, except her self, are in a very comfortable condition; and that all, save her self, find a remedy for their troubles. This so afflicts her, that, unless our Lord helped her by some Rapt, wherein all is calmed, and the Soule remains in a great quiet, and well pleased, somtimes by seeing something of that, which she desires, and other times by hearing other things, it would be impossible, without some of these, to get out of this pain.

4. Somtimes there come upon me certain desires of serving God, with some impetuositie so vehement, that I know not how to express, and also a grief to see how unprofitable I am. Me-thinks at such time, that no labour, nothing painful could be presented to me, neither Death, nor Martyrdom, which I would not suffer with ease. Which befalls me likewise, not using any consideration, and discourse of the Understanding, but in an instant, and it totally overwhelms me, and turns me upside down, so that I know not from whence such extraordinary courage seizeth me. Me-thinks I would cry out aloud, and give all to understand how much it concerns them not to content themselves with mean things; and how great a happiness that is which God will give us, if we dispose our selves thereto. These desires, I say, are so intense, that I am inwardly consumed, in seeing my self to will, what I am not able to effect. Me-thinks this Body holds me fast, that I am not fit to serve God in any thing; as also my condition; for, did not they hinder, I would do very heroick actions, as far as my strength permitted: so that, upon seeing my self wholly unable to serve God, I feel this pain in such sort, as I cannot express. But it ends in Delight, Recollection, and Divine Consolation.

5. Som-

5. Somtimes it hath fallen out; that, when these anxious desires of serving God come upon me, I have had a mind to do Penance, but cannot. This would be a great pleasure to me; and those, which I perform at present, do delight, and cheer me, though they are in a manner nothing, by reason of my weakness of Body: which if it should leave me, with these Desires, I conceive I should be immoderate therein.

6. Somtimes it is a great trouble to me to converse with any; and it so afflicts me, that it makes me weep exceedingly; for, all my desire is to be alone; and, though somtimes I neither pray, nor read, yet the solitude comforts me. And especially conversing with kindred seems offensive to me, and I am as it were a Slave when among them; except it be with such, whom I treat with concerning matters of Prayer, and of my Soul; for, discoursing with such comforts, and delights me: though somtimes these two displease me, and I would fain not see them neither, but go, where I might be alone; yet this very seldom; for, those, with whom I treat about matters of my Conscience, usually afford me singular Consolation. At other times it troubles me that I must eat, and sleep, and to see, that I can no more than any other, forego these. I do it, to serve God; and so, offer it to him.

7. All time seems too short to me, and that I want leisure enough to exercise Prayer; for that I should never be weary of being alone. I always desire the having time to Read; for to this I have ever been much affected. I read but a little at a time; because in taking up the Book I am presently satisfied, and recollect'd; so that Reading freight passeth into Praying: yet this lasts but a while, because I have many employments; which, though good, do not yet delight me so, as this would. And thus I am ever desiring more time, which makes every thing to be so distastful and unsavoury to me; as I conceive, because I see, what I would have, and most desire, is not effected.

8. All these desires, and more Virtue, hath our Lord bestowed on me since he gave me this Quiet Prayer, and these Raps; and I find my self so improved, that me-thinks I was, before, a lost creature.

9. These Raps and Visions leave in me the benefits which I will here relate: and I declare, if I have any good, it hath proceeded hence.

10. I have had a very strong Resolution of not offending God, no; not venially; so that I would rather dye a thousand times, than commit, wittingly, such an offence.

11. I am resolved, not to omit any thing, that I thought to be of greater perfection, and whereby I should more serve our Lord, (provided that my spiritual Guide and Director tell me so much) for what pain soever, nor for any treasure of the world; and, should I do otherwise, I could not have the face to ask our Lord any thing, or to use Prayer; though in all this I commit many defects, and imperfections.

12. I yield obedience to my *Confessor*, though with some imperfection; yet, when once I know that he wills a thing, or that he enjoys me it, as far as I understand, I would not omit the doing it; and, should I neglect it, I should think my self mightily deluded.

13. I have a desire of Poverty, though likewise imperfect; but, methinks, did I possess vast treasures, I would have no particular revenue, or money to my self alone, nor care I for it: I would only have necessaries. Yet for all this, I perceive, I am very defective in this virtue; for, though I desire not any thing for my self, yet I would have it to give away; notwithstanding that I wish neither rent, nor other things for my self.

14. In all the Visions as it were, that I have had, I have remained with benefit, if this also be not an illusion of the Devil. Herein I remit my self to my Confessors.

15. When I see any thing fair, and splendid, as water, fields, flowers; or smell sweet scents, or hear Musick, and the like, methinks I would not see or hear them; there is so great a difference from what I used to see; and so my appetite to them is much abated. Hence it proceeds, that I care so little for these things; for, except it be some first motion, no other thought of them stays with me; and they seem meer dirt to me.

16. If I talk or converse with Secular persons, (for, this cannot be avoided) though it be about matters of Prayer, if the discourse be long, notwithstanding it be in a time of diversion, unless the occasion be necessary, I offer violence to my self; for it troubles me much.

17. All matters of Recreation and Mirth, which I was wont to love, as also things of the world, now displease me so, that I cannot patiently see, or observe them.

18. These Desires of loving and serving God, and of seeing him, (which, as I said, I have), are not advanced with consideration, and discourse of the Understanding, as formerly I used, and as I had them, when I seemed to my self very devout, and shedding many tears: but with

with an enflaming, and fervour so excessive, that, I say again, if God by some Rapt (wherein, it seems, the Soul rests satisfied and contented) did not relieve me; me-thinks my Life would presently be at an end.

19. Those, whom I see great Proficients, and armed with such resolutions, utterly disengaged, and courageous, I love exceedingly; and with such persons I would converse; and, me-thinks they help me;

20. Persons, whom I perceive timorous, and who to my thinking go groping, and in suspense as it were, in matters, which in all conformity to reason may here be done, me-thinks disgust me, and make me cry out to God, and the Saints, who undertook and overcame these things, which now affright us. Not that I am good for any thing; but because I conceive that God afflicts those, who for his sake attempt great things; for he never fails such as trust in him alone. And I would fain meet with one that would help me in more firmly believing after this sort, and taking no care what to eat, or weare, but leave such things to Gods Providence.

[Here these words were added, writ by the Holy Mothers hand.]

My meaning is not; that the leaving to God the providing me necessaries is after such a manner, as not to endeavour the procuring them; but not with a solicitude, which disquiets me. And, since our Lord hath given me this liberty, it hath thriven well with me; and I labour to forget my self as much as I can. I think it is about a year since our Lord bestowed this upon me.

21. Vain-glory, God be praised, that I know, there is no reason for me to have any; because I see manifestly, that in these things which God gives, I contribute nothing of my own. Nay God rather discovers to me my own miseries; for, with all that I am able to think on, I could not come to discern so many truths, as in a little space of time I now understand.

22. When I speak of these matters, since a few days ago, they seem to me to be as of some other person: sometimes, heretofore, I thought it a shame that such things should be known concerning me; but now, me-thinks, I am not the better for this, but the worse, since I profit so little by so great favours. And indeed I conceive on every account, there is not in all the world a worse than my self; and so the virtues of others seem to me much more meritorious; and I do nothing, but receive favours; God will give others at once all that together, which he retailes here to me: and I beseech him, that he would not reward

me in this life ; whereupon I believe God hath led me by this way, because so weak and miserable.

23. Being in Prayer, and even always almost, when I am able to meditate a little, though I should endeavour it, I cannot ask, nor desire of God Rest ; because I see, He lived altogether in Labours : which I beseech him to give me likewise, bestowing first grace on me to be able to sustain them.

24. All matters of this kind, and of very high Perfection, seem to be so imprinted in me in Prayer, as I am astonished to behold so many, and so manifest, truths ; that even the things of this world seem mere fooleries to me : and so I must use some advertency to bethink me, how I have formerly behayed my self in matters of the world ; for, it seems now an impertinence, to be grieved at deaths, and other miseries of it ; at least, that any grief for, or love to, our kindred, and the like, should last long. I would say, that it costs me some pains to consider what a one I have been, and with what I have been troubled, and disgusted.

25. If I see in some persons certain things, that apparently seem to be sins, I cannot absolutely conclude that they have offended God : and, if I stay my thought upon it a while, which is very little or nothing, I never determine in my self to make a certain judgment thereon, though I perceive it to be evident : nay, me-thinks, all have the same care of serving God, that I have. And herein his Majesty hath done me a singular favour, that I never engage my self in any ill matter that I afterward remember it : Or, if I do remember it, I ever see some virtue or other in the same Person ; so that such things do not trouble me, except it be some universal, or publick sin, and Heresies ; for these often afflict me ; and almost every time I think on them, I conceive this is the only calamity that is to be laid to heart. I am grieved also, if I see any, that formerly used and addicted themselves to Prayer, fall back again : this troubles me, yet not much ; because I strike against the entertaining of such thoughts.

26. I find my self also amended as to Curiosities, whereto I was accustomed, though not entirely ; for I do not always perceive my self mortified herein, though I am somtimes.

27. All this, which I have said, is that, that ordinarily passeth within my Soul, as far as I can understand ; and the having my thoughts upon God is a thing very constant with me. Yea, And though I am treating of other matters, as I say, without my procurement, I know not who doth awaken me ; and this not always, but when I treat of certain

certain matters of importance : and God be praised, such things busie my thoughts only from time to time [with intervals] and not perpetually.

28. It befalls me somtimes, though this not so oft (and it lasts for three, or four, or five days) that me-thinks all good things, all fer-vours and Visions, are taken from me, yea rased out of my Memory ; that though I would remember them, I know not that any good hath been in me : all seems a Dream to me ; at least I cannot remember a ny thing. Corporal pains torment me, many at once ; my Under-standing is disturbed, so that I can think on nothing of God ; neither know I under what Law I live. If I read, I understand nothing ; me-thinks I am all full of imperfections, without any affection at all to Vertue. And the great courage, which I use to have, here I quite lose ; and to my thinking, I could not resist the least temptation, & detrac-tion, in the world. I then discern that I am good for nothing : and who obligeth me to do more than is ordinarily practised ? I am melancholick ; and imagine, that I delude all those that have me in any esteem ; I would fain hide my self, where none might see me ; I then desire not solitude for Vertue's sake, but out of pusillanimity. Me-thinks I would contend with all that should contradict me. I sustain this battery ; wherein yet God doth me this favour, not to offend him more, than I am wont to do ; nor do I request him to take this from me ; but that, if it be his pleasure, I continue thus always, He hold me in his hand, that I offend him not, and that I conform my self to him with all my heart ; yea, I conceive, that he doth me a very great favour, in not keeping me continually in this State.

29. One thing astonisheth me, that, I being in this sort, upon one of those Words only which I use to hear, or one Vision, or a little Re-collec-tion, that lasts but for an *Ave Maria*, or upon my approaching to the Communion, both my Soul and Body remain very quiet, very sound, and my Understanding much cleared, with all that cour-age, and those desires which I am wont to have ; and this I have ex-perience of ; for I find it so very often ; at least when I receive the *B. Sacrament*. It is above half a year ago since I thus perceive a man-ifest bodily health, and this somtimes by Raps ; which Sanity lasts somtimes above three hours ; and at other times I continue all day with great amendment ; and in my opinion it is no delusion ; for, I have ob-served it well, and used great vigilance and care therein. In-somuch that when I have this Recollection, I fear no disease. It is true, that when I use or have such Prayer, as formerly, I find not this betterment of my health.

30. All this, which I have mentioned, makes me believe these things are of God ; for, knowing what a one I was, who travelled in the way of destruction, and finding my self in a short space enriched, not understanding whence these Vertues came, I did not know my self ; and saw it was a thing given ; and not gotten by labour. I perceive with all truth, and clarity (and I know I am not deceived) that it was not only a means, whereby God drew me to his Service, but likewise rescued me from Hell : as my *Confessors* know, who have taken my General Confession.

31. When also I see a Person that knows any thing of me, I would fain make him understand my life ; for, me-thinks, I am honoured, when our Lord is praised ; and I care for nothing else. This He knows very well, or I am very blind ; that there is neither honour, nor life, nor glory, nor any good of Body or Soul, that can retain me ; nor do I seek, or desire, my own interest, but only his Glory. I cannot believe the Devil would seek out so many good things for the benefiting of my Soul, so to destroy it afterward ; for I do not think him so silly. Nor can I imagine that God, though I for my sins deserve to be deceived, would reject so many fervent Prayers of so many good men as have been made within these two years : For, I do nothing else but recommend my self to the Prayers of all, that our Lord would let me know, whether this be for his glory ; otherwise, that he would lead me some other way. I do not believe his Divine Majesty would suffer these things to go on still, if they were not of him. These things, and the excellent reasons of so many Saints encourage me at such time, when I am in these fears that they are not of God, I being so wicked : But, when I am in Prayer, and on those days that I am in quietude, and with my thoughts fixed on God, should all the Learned men and Saints, that are in the world, joyne together, and put me to all the torments imaginable, and were I willing to believe it, they could not make me conceive that this is the Devil ; for, I cannot do it possibly. And, when they have had a mind to make me believe it, I was affraid indeed, considering who spake it, and I conceived they must needs be deceived ; But, upon the first Word, or Recollection, or Vision, all that they said to me vanished, I could do no otherwise ; and I believe it was from God.

32. Although I can imagine that the Devil sometimes may interpose (and so indeed he doth, as I have said, and have seen) yet he produceth very different effects ; and who-so hath experience, will not, in my opinion, be deceived by him.

33. Not-

33. Notwithstanding all this, I say; that, although I firmly believe that it is God; yet I would not for all the world do any thing, (except he that hath the charge of me, thinks it more to Gods Service). Nor did I ever understand otherwise, but that I was to obey, and to look that I did conceal nothing; for that this was expedient for me. I am very usually repoved for my defects, and so severely, that it pierceth my very bowels: I am also advertised, when there is, or may be, any danger in the affairs that I manage; which thing hath greatly benefited me, in bringing to my mind many times my former sins, and causing in me great compunction.

34. I have enlarged my self much; but for certain thus it is, that, in respect of the benefits I find in my self, when I come out of Prayer, me-thinks I am here too brief in them: afterward, I remain with many imperfections, without fruit, and very bad. Perhaps I do not understand what is good, but deceive my self: yet the change of my life is notorious, and makes me think so.

35. In all that I have said, me-thinks, I have spoken that which I have really experienced. These are the Perfections which I perceive our Lord hath wrought in me, so miserable, and imperfect. I refer it all to the judgment of your Reverence, since you know my whole Soul.

" This Relation was writ in another hand; though, as afterward we
" shall see, the Holy Mother saith, it is as She her self writ it. What
" follows was written all in her own hand, after this manner.

II. RELATION,

Continuing the same matter.

36. I conceive it is above a year since I writ this that precedes here. All this while God hath held me by his hand, that I have not grown worse; but rather perceive a great amendment in that which I shall now further relate: He be praised in, and for, all.

37. My Visions and Revelations do not cease, but are rather more sublime. Our Lord hath taught me a manner of Prayer, by which I find my self more improved, and with a much greater disengagement from

from the things of this life, and with more courage and liberty. My Raps are increased ; for, somtimes they come with a force, and in such a manner, that without my being able to help my self, or to resist, it is externally perceived, and that too, whilst I am in company ; for, it is of such a sort, that it cannot be disguised, unless it be by intimating, that (I being subject to the Palpitation of the Heart) it is some kind of swooning : and although I have a great care to resist it in the beginning, yet somtimes I cannot.

38. As to what concerns Poverty, it seems to me, that God hath done me an exceeding great favour ; for, I would not so much as have necessaries, except by way of Almes ; and so, I exceedingly desire to be where they live only on Charity. Me-thinks, that living where I am certain, and secure of not wanting food, and raiment, doth not fulfill in so great perfection the Vow, or Counsel of Christ, as where there is no Revenue to live upon ; for such somtimes will be in want : and the advantages gotten by true Poverty are, me-thinks, so many, that I would not lose them. I find my self endued with so great a Faith many times, in thinking that God cannot be wanting to them that serve him ; nor doubting at all that his Words at any time can faile ; that I cannot perswade my self otherwise, nor cannot fear ; and so I am afflicted much, when they advise me to admit and receive Rent ; and I have recourse to God, who helps me.

39. Me-thinks I have much more compassion of the Poor, than I was wont to have formerly. I have a great pitty toward them; and perceive in my self a great desire of relieving them ; and, if I followed my own inclination, I should give them the very Cloaths that I wear. I have no abhorrence, or aversion from them, though I dress and handle them : and this now I see is the gift of God ; because, though I formerly for his sake bestowed Alms, yet I had not that natural tenderness toward them. In this I perceiye a very manifest improvement.

40. Concerning things said of me by way of detraction, which are many, and very prejudicial to me, I find my self likewise improved ; me-thinks they make no more impression on me, than on one stupid ; and I think, somtimes, yea almost always, that they have reason. I am so little affected therewith, that me-thinks I have nothing therein to offer to God : finding by experience, how my Soul gains much thereby, it seems to me rather, that they do me a great fayour : so that upon the first occasion of betaking my self to Prayer, I find not the least enmity, or repugnance against them. For, although at first, when

when I hear it; it causeth in me a little reluctance, yet not with any disquiet, or alteration in me; nay, somtimes when I see certain persons, that take pity on me, I laugh to my self; since all the miseries of this life seem to me so inconsiderable, that there is no reason to grieve therat; for, I imagine that I am as in a Dream, and, upon my awaking, I see that all will prove nothing.

41. God gives me more lively desires, more mind to solitude, a much greater disengagement from the world (as I said) together with Visions; whereby I am made to understand what all is, although I should forsake all my friends of both Sexes, and my Kindred every where; indeed my Kindred, many of them, rather weary me, and disquiet me; whom with all freedom, and content I quit, when it may conduce never so little to the serving God better; and so I, on all sides, find peace.

42. Some things, whereof I have been advertised in Prayer, have befallen me very punctually. So that, in respect of God's doing me favours, I find my self much better; but, in serving him on my part, very much worse: Since I have received the consolations that have been presented to me; though somtimes this much afflicts me; the Penance I do is little; the honour they do me, is much; and, many times, much against my will.

III. RELATION,

Containing the same matter.

43. IT is about Nine Moneths since I writ this, which is here pened in my own hand. From that time having not turned my back upon the favours, which God hath done me, me-thinks (according to what I understood) I have received anew a much greater liberty. Till now, me-thought, I had need of others; and I put more confidence in the succours of the world; now I perceive clearly, they are all as so many sticks of dried Rosemary, and that there is no security in relying upon them; for, upon the least weight of contradiction, or detraction, pressing them, they are broken. Therefore I have found by experience, that the true remedy against our falling is lean-

Leaning on the Cross, and trusting in him, who was fastned to it. I find him a real true Friend, and hereby am posseſſed of ſuch an abſolute dominion, that me-thinks I could reſiſt all the world, ſhould it oppoſe me, iſ God do not deſert me:

44. I know this truth ſo maniſt, that, though formerly I was wont to delight in being loved by others, now I care not at all for it; me-thinks it rather diſgûfts me; except thoſe, with whom I treat about the matters of my Soul, or thoſe, whom I intend to benefit; the one, that they may endure me; and the other, that they may more willingly believe me, in what I ſpeak, concerning the Vanity of all things; Théſe, I ſay, I would be loved by.

45. In many ſore affiſtions, perſecutions, and contraſtions, which I have met with theſe Months paſt, our Lord hath given me great courage; and, the greater the troubls, the greater my courage, without being weary of ſuffering. And I not only was not diſpleased with them that ſpake ill of me; but, me-thinks, I bare them a new affection; I know not how this could be; it is very evident, that it was a thing given by the hand of God.

46. Naturally I am wont, when I deſire a thing, to be over-eager in affecting it; now, my deſires are ſo calme, that, when I ſee them fulfiſhed, I cannot understand, whether I ſhouſd rejoyce, or grieve; unless it be in matters about Prayer, all is ſo moderated, that I ſeem ſtupid, and do continue in this ſort for ſome days.

47. The ardours of doing Peñance, which ſomtimes feiſe me, and have feiſed me, are great; and, iſ I do any, I feel it ſo little, through that vehement deſire, that ſomtimes, and almoſt always, me-thinks it is a recreation, and particular deſtit: though I do little in that kind, because I am very infirm.

48. It is an exream pain to me many times, and this, now, more exceilive, to be to eat; especially, iſ I be in Prayer, it is very great; for, it makes me weep abundantly, and utter words of grief, as it were without perceiving it: which I use not to do for the greatest affiſtions, which I have had in thiſ life; at leaſt, I do not remember that I have uttered any: for, in theſe matters I am not a Woman, having an hard heart.

49. I feel in my ſelf, more than I was wont, a very great deſire, that God ſhould have perſonas who ſerve him with all diſengagement, and who adhere not to any thing of thiſ mortal life; ſeeing, that all is ſport; especially Schollars; for, perceiving the Church's great neceſſity (which afflicts me ſo, that me-thinks it is a mockery to be troubled at any thing elſe) I do nothing but recommend them to God;

God; because I see that one person intirely perfect, with a true fervour of the love of God, will do more, than many, with tepidity.

50. In matters of Faith, I have (to my thinking) a much greater resolution : me-thinks I would oppose my self, alone, against all the *Lutherans*, to make them understand the error, they are in, and the false opinions, they hold : and I extreamly resent the raigne of so many Souls.

51. I see many Souls advanced, which, I evidently discerne, it was Gods will, shoulde be so, by my means ; and I perceive, through his goodness, that my Soul goes on increasing every day more and more in loving him.

52. Me-thinks that, though I earnestly desired it, I could not be transported with Vain-glory ; nor do I see, how I could imagine that any of these Vertues is my own : for, it is not very long, since I was for many years observed without any ; and now, on my part, I do nothing else but receive favours, without service, as the most useleſſ thing in the world. And so it is, that I somtimes consider, how all do benefit, except my self, who am good for nothing. I speak not this out of humility, but because it is the very truth : and the knowing myself so useleſſ, makes me somtimes fearfull, lest perhaps I be deluded. So that I see evidently, that these advantages came from these Revelations, and Raptus ; in which I have no share, nor contribute to the receiving them more, than a Stock. This makes me secure, and much quieter, and I cast my self into the Armes of God, and am confident in my Desires, which I know for certain are even to dye for his sake, and to lose all manner of repose, come what can come.

53. Days do come, wherein I infinitely recal to mind what *S. Paul* faith (though it is not securely, and really, so in me) that, me-thinks, I neither live, nor speak, nor have any Will ; but that there is One within me, who governs me, and strengthens me, and I go about as one besides my self, so that life is a very great torment to me. And the greatest thing, I offer to God as a special Seruice, is, (it being so painful to me to be separated from him) a willingness to live, notwithstanding, for his sake. This, I would have, that it should be in great afflictions, and persecutions ; since I am not fit for Service, I would be so for suffering ; and I would endure all the crosses in the world for a little more Merit ; I mean, the better to accomplish his Will.

I have heard nothing in Prayer, though many years before it fell out, but I have seen it all fulfilled. The things that I see, and that

Q q 2. which.

which I understand of the greatnesses of God, and how he hath disposed them, are so many, that I almost never begin to think thereon, but my Reason, and Understanding fails me, as one that sees things transcending his capacity ; and I continue in Recollection. God preserves me so from offending him, that really I am somtimes astonished; for, me-thinks, I see the great care he takes of me, without my contributing thereto any thing on my part, who was, before these things, an Ocean of sins, and wickedness ; so that, me-thought, I had not power over my self to forbear committing them. And the reason, why I would have all this known, is, hereby to manifest the great power of God. Be He eternally praised. Amen.

*" After this She begins thus (prefixing according to her usual manner
" still when She writ, the Name of Jesus thus).*

I H S.

This Relation set down here in the beginning, which is not written with my own hand, is that, which I gave to my *Confessor*, and he with his own hand copied from mine, without diminishing, or adding any thing. He was a very spiritual person, and a *Divine*, to whom I communicated all the affairs of my Soul, whereof he conferred with other learned Persons, among whom was Father *Mancio*; these found nothing therein, which is not very consonant to Holy Scripture. This makes me now very quiet ; though I know, whilst God leads me in this way, I must not trust my self in any thing ; and so I have always done, though it much troubles me. See, that all this continue under the Seal of Confession, as I have desired of your Reverence.

*" Thus far are the words of the Holy Mother : and this Relation she
" made living in the Monastery of the Incarnation, before she went a-
" broad to found according to the new Reformation : and the first
" Relation was at the beginning, when she began entirely and seriously
" to devote Her self to God, and his Majesty to shewre down upon
" her Supernatural favours ; as may be gathered from Number, 8 31.
" 33. 38. 48, 49.*

*" She writ the second Relation above a Year after ; as appears by
" the beginning of it. And hereby is manifested to how great Per-
" fection she arrived in so short a space ; a thing justly cauling admi-
" ration. Now, She who in the beginning soared so high, to what a
" pitch would she arrive, increasing every day more and more in the
" Love of God, in the space of above Two or Three and Twenty
" Years,*

" Years, that she lived afterward ? with so many Divine Favours, so
" many Penances, and crosses, so many Monasteries erected, so many
" Souls gained, such high Prayer, so continual Mortification, and so
" incomparable a treasure of Good Works, as she afterward ac-
" quired. If then her beginnings were such, as to surpass the utmost
" endeavours of very perfect Souls, how far may we imagine, did her
" final efforts reach ?

IV. RELATION.

*Which the Holy Mother made her self in the Third Person :
The Original of which, Writ by the Saint with her own
Hand, is kept in the Covent of the Discalced Friars Car-
melites at Viterbo.*

This Nun took the Habit Fourty Years ago ; and, from the first, began to meditate on the *Passion* of our *Lord*, throughout the several Mysteries of it ; as also on her own Sins, without ever minding things Supernatral, but only thinking npon the Creatures, or those Subjects, from which she collected the short, and sudden, ending of all things ; and herein she spent some Hours of the Day, without its entring into her thoughts to desire higher matters, for that she had so base an esteem of her self, that she deserved not so much as to think on God. And in this Exercise she continued about some Two and Twenty Years, in great Aridity, helping her self by the Reading of good Books.

It is about Eighteen Years ago, that she began to treat of founding the first Monastery of *Discalced Nuns* in the City of *Avila* ; and, almost Three Years before that, she began to think, that at times something was spoken interiorly to her ; that she saw several Visions ; and had Revelations ; in which she never saw any thing with her corporal eyes, (save only one Representation, that passed away like a flash) but what was thus interiorly seen remained so deeply imprinted upon her, and left such effects, as though she had seen it with the eyes of her Body, and more.

Upon this She was exceeding fearfhl, in such sort, as she durst not sometimes stay alone, and being not able (though she endeavoured it never so much) to avoid these things, she lived in great affliction, fearing they might be illusions, and deceits of the Devil : Whereupon she began very seriously to treat, and confer with Spiritual persons of the *Society of Jesus*, among whom one was Father *Araez*, who being *Commissary* for the *Society* happened to come thither : And another, Father *Francis Borgia*, that had been *Duke of Gandia*; with these she treated twice. She conferred likewise with a *Provincial* of the said *Society*, who lives now in *Rome* an *Assistant* to the *General*, called Father *Gonzalez*; and with the now-*Provincial* of *Castile*; though with this not so much ; with Father *Baltasar Alvarez*, who at present is *Rector* of *Salamanca*, and was her *Confessor* Six Years ; with Father *Salaizar*; and Father *Santander*, *Rector* of *Segovia*; and with the Father *Rector* of *Burgos*, named *Ripalda*, who had a very bad opinion of her, till he heard her, and talked with her ; with Father *Paul Fernandez* of *Toledo*, who was a *Consultor* of the *Inquisition*; and with another, called *Ordegnex*, that was *Rector* in *Avila* : For, to her power she endeavoured to confer with those, who, in the *Society*, were most reputed.

She communicated much with Fa. Fr. *Peter of Alcantara*, and he was one that did much for her. All these, for above six Years, made many Tryals of her ; and She thereupon lived in continual afflictions, and tears : but, the more Trials were made, the more Divine Suspensions and Relveations she had, both whilist in Prayer, and also out of it. Many Prayers were made, and Masses said, that God would guide her by some other way her fear being extream when she was not in Prayer ; though, in all things that concerned the Service of God, there was discerned a manifest improvement, and no kind of vain-glory, or Pride ; nay she was ashamed, and blushed in the presence of those, that knew of it ; and felt more confusion in discoursing thereof, than of her sins ; because she thought they would laugh at her, and imagine them to be some fancies of Women.

About some Thirteen Years ago, little more or less, when there came hither to *Toledo* the *ishop of Salamanca*, who (if my memory fail me not) was *Inquisitor*, she procured to have speech with him, for her greater assurance ; and she gave him an account of all. He made her answer, that, as to all that she had communicated to him, there was nothing that appertained to his Office ; because all her Visions, and Speeches, which she heard, confirmed her in the Catholick Faith, where-

wherein she had always lived, and continued very constant, and with great desires of the honour of God, and the good of Souls, in such sort, as she would for each point thereof spend (if she had so many) a thousand lives. He bad her, seeing her much dejected, She should write to Father *Avila* a compleat Relation of all these things, who being one much exercised, and skilled in Prayer, She should acquiesce in the answer that he made her. She did so punctually : and Fa. *Avila* returned her an Answer, greatly confirming her ; and such was the aforesaid Relation of her Life, as that all the Learned, who had been her Confessors, after due examination, approved of, and reported it to be very beneficial, and advantageous for direction, and light in matters Spiritual ; and enjoyned her, it should be copied, and so another little Book for her *Daughters*, || (She || *The Way of being then Prioress*), in which She gave them some *Perfection*, good Instructions. Notwithstanding all this, She was not without certain fears from time to time, as conceiving, that also Spiritual Persons might be deceived, as well as She ; and so She would always be discoursing and conferring with great Scholars, though they were not much given to Prayer ; for, her aim was only to know whether all these things, which She found, and experienced in her self, were consonant to the *Holy Scripture* : and somtimes She was comforted, as thinking, that, though for her sins She deserved to be deceived, yet God would not permit, that so many excellent Servants of his should deceive her, who desired to give her light.

To the same purpose She began to treat of these matters with the Fathers of *S. Dominic's Order*, to whom, even before She had them, She had used to confess : namely, with Father *Vincentius Varron*, who heard her *Confessions* a Year and half in *Toledo*, whither She went to found a *Monastery of Discalced Nuns*. He was a *Consultor* of the *Inquisition*, a person very learned, and who quieted her very much (as likewise did all the others) by telling her, that, whilst She was careful not to offend God, and acknowledged her self with true humility a miserable Creature, she had no cause to fear. She Confessed six Years to Father *Fr. Dominicus Bannez*, who is now *Consultor* of the *Inquisition* in *Valladolid* ; and every time any new thing occurred to her in his absence, she consulted him by Letters, and received his advice. To the Father *Doctor Chaves* likewise [*Confessor to King Philip II*] ; to Fa. *Peter Jnagnez*, being *Reader* in *Avila*, and a very great Scholar ; to Fa. *Garzia* of *Toledo* ; and to Father *Bartholomew of Medina*, *Chief Reader of Divinity at Salamanca*, of whom she

she understood, that he had an ill opinion of her, for certain things; that he heard of her; whereupon she conceived, that he might better than any other certifie her, whether she were deluded by the Devil; so she procured to confess to him, and gave him a long and free relation concerning her Spirit, and Prayer, whilst she staid about founding a Monastery at *Salamanca*; and, that he might the better understand her life, she shewed him that which she had written by command of her Confessors; he secured her exceedingly, and much more than all the restbearing a great affection to her. This happened now some two years since, or a little more. She treated likewise with Father *Philip Meneses*, Rector of the Colledge of *S. Gregory* in *Valladolid*; who, having heard many things of her, and the varions opinions of people; moved with great Charity went to *Avila* to speak with her, desirous to understand, and know, whether she were deceived by the Devil; if not, to undertake her defence; since, then, it was not reasonable, she should be so much spoken against: and he was thereupon exceedingly satisfied.

She also conferred particularly with a *Dominican Father Provincial*, called Father *Salinas*, a man very Spiritual, and a great Servant of God; and with another *Reader*, who lives at present in *Segovia*, called *Fa. Diego Jangues*, one of a very sharp understanding. She, remaining always with fears upon the occasions, which for divers years she had of going to several places for founding Monasteries, enjoyed also the opportunity of treating with many others, who sufficiently tried her; all aiming at the giviug her more light; and so both she, and they became satisfied and assured.

She ever was, and (through Gods mercy) is, obedient to all, that the Holy Catholick Faith holds; and all her own Prayer, as also of the Monasteries erected by her, is directed to the augmentation thereof. She said, that, if auy of these Visions, Revelations, or Speeches, had incited her to a thing, that had been contrary to any point of the Catholick Faith, or Gods Law, she should not have been necessitated to seek out persons, to have resolved her; for hence she should soon have perceived it to have been the Devil. She never did any thing meerly because that she had heard it in Prayer, but ever communicated all to her *Confessors*; who if somtimes they told her the contrary to that, which our Lord had said, she did it, and obeyed immediatly. She never believed so very confidently, that it was God that spake to her (though it was told her that it was he), as that she would have sworn it; notwithstanding that by the effects, and by the great favours

vours, which our Lord did her, she judged in some things that it was a good Spirit; but she always desired Vertues, and herein settled, and founded her *Nuns*, saying, that the most Humble, and Mortified would prove the most Spiritual. That which she writ she gave to *Fr. Dominicus Banez*, living now at *Valladolid*; with whom she conferred (and still doth) more than with others; she thinks, he will present it to the *Inquisition* in *Madrid*; in all she submits to the judgment, and correction of the Holy Church of *Rome*, and the *Catholick Faith*. None hath blamed her, because these things she suffers are such, as are not in the power of any, and our Lord requires nothing impossible.

She, by reason of the great fear she was in, having given an account to so many, divers of these things came to be divulged; which proved an excessive torment to her; and that not from Humility (said she) but because she detested those things that were reported of Women. She feared extreamly to submit her self to one, whom she thought apt to believe that all was from God; for she was afraid presently, lest the Devil might deceive him. She communicated much more willingly the matters of her Soul to one, whom she saw timorous; notwithstanding she suffered likewise from those, who altogether contemned these things, though only to try her; it seeming to her, that some of them were very evidently from God; and she would not willingly see, that they blamed her without cause, and condemned her peremptorily; as neither, that they should believe they were all of God; for, she understood very well, there might be a deceit therein; and therefore she never seemed absolutely secure in a thing, wherein there might be danger.

She procured, all she could, not to offend God in any thing, and ever to be obedient; and with these two things she imagined her self secured, and exempt from all delusion of the Devil. From the time that she begun to have Supernatural Favours, her Spirit ever inclined to endeavour after greater Perfection; and almost ordinarily she had vehement desires of Suffering: and in Persecutions (whereof she had store) she was comforted, and bare a particular affection to the party that persecuted her. She had likewise a great desire to Poverty, and Solitude, and to quit this Exile to see God.

By these and other such like effects she began to be satisfied; as conceiving, that a Spirit, that left in her these Vertues, could not be ill; and so also she told them, with whom she conversed; yet not by totally ceasing to fear, but by an exemption from so great anxiety.

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and perplexity. Her Spirit never prevailed with her to conceal any thing, but she obeyed ever. She never saw any of these things with her bodily eyes, as hath been said already, but in a certain delicate, and subtle manner, and so very Spiritual, that somtimes, in the beginnings she thought she was mistaken ; and again, at other times, she could not think so. Neither did she ever discern these things with her corporal ears, except twice, at which times she understood nothing of that which was said to her ; nor knew, who said it.

These Interiour things were not continual, but at some times, in certain necessities. One of these was, when, having been some days in intolerable interiour sufferings, and under an internal restlesnes, caused by a fear of being deluded by the Devil (as is written more at large in that Relation, that I mentioned) and by the remembiring her great sins, so exceedingly afflicted as cannot be expressed, by hearing only these Words in her Interiour ; *It is I ; fear not* ; her Soul became so quieted, courageous, and settled, that she could not conceive whence so great a good should come ; since she had not been with any Confessor, nor woud many Learned men with their long discourses, and several reafons have been able to produce in her this peace, and quiet, which she felt from one of these Divine Words. At other times likewise she was animated by some Vision ; for, if she had not had such things as these, it had seem'd impossible to sustain so great labours, oppositions, and sickneses ; which were innumerable ; and even at present her life so passeth, as that she is never without some kind of suffering ; though there is more and less ; but, most-what, the labours under pains, and other infirmities ; which, since her being a *Religious Woman*, have much oppressed her. If in any thing she serves God, and receives favours from him, they at the same time pass very cursorily through her Memory, though she often recalls to mind the favours ; but they remain not so fixed, and imprinted therein, as doth the remembrance of her Sins, which are continually annoying her, like some stinking kennel.

Her having committed so many Sins, and so little served God, must needs be the cause of her not being tempted with Vain-glory. She never perceived in her self from any of the fore-mentioned Spiritual Favours any ill motion, or any incentive to Sensuality ; but every thing hath been carried with all Modesty and Chastity ; above all, she hath had a great fear of offending God, and a great desire of doing in every thing his holy Will ; this she hath begged of him continually, and (to her thinking) is so resolute in the not departing

from

from, that nothing could be said to her, in which she thought she might greatly serve, and please our Lord, by her Confessors, Superiors, or those that govern her, which she would omit to do; trusting in our Lord, who assists them, that are resolved to advance his Service, and Glory.

In comparison of this, she no more minds her self, and her own interest, than if she were not in the world. As far as she can understand concerning her self, and her Confessors can perceive, it is a great truth, all, that is contained in this Letter; and your Reverence may, if it please you, be certified thereof by them, and by all those, who have known her for about Twenty Years since. This Spirit of hers moved her very frequently unto the praises of God, and she would have all the world do the same, though it should cost her dear. Hence she was seized with a great desire of the good of Souls; and beheld, how base, and vain all external things of this World are; and how precious the internal, which are not to be compared to any of these terrene things; and thereupon she came to undervalue them all.

The Manner of the *Visions*, which you enquire of me, is after such sort, that nothing is seen, either internally, or externally, because it is not an Imaginary Vision; but the Soul, without seeing any thing, understands, and knows, who it is; and whereabouts he is; it is more clearly represented to her, than if she saw it with her corporal eyes, save that nothing in particular is represented to her; but in such sort, that one may perceive, that another stands by her; and, because they are in the dark, she sees him not, yet is certain, he is there. Though this Comparison is not full; for, one in the dark perceives, one is there, by some token; or by hearing a noise, or from having formerly seen and known the party; but here, nothing of all this intervenes; but, even without any external Word, she most manifestly understands Who it is, and on which side He stands; though, she is not able, when she would, sometimes to express, and relate it, nor how long it lasts; but thus indeed it passeth. After the Vision is ended, how much soever she desires to imagine it after the same manner, as it was before, it availes, nor helps nothing, because it is evident, that this is an Imagination, and not the true Pretence of our *Lord*, or of the *Saints*, and the like; such things not being in her power: and so are all Supernatural things. Hence comes his not valuing himself, or being proud of any of those things, to whomsoever God doth this favour; for, he seeth it is a thing bestowed *gratis*; and that he can neither diminish, nor add any thing thereto. This makes one continue in much

greater Humility, Love, and desire ever to serve this Lord ; so very powerful, that he can do all that, whereof we, how learned soever we be, are not able to understand the Manner ; these being things which our Discourse, and Understanding reach not to. Be He, that gives them, eternally Blessed. Amen.

V. RELATION.

Written by the Holy Mother to a Confessor of hers, touching the manner of her Prayer.

IN all that I shall say, I beseech *your Reverence* to understand, that it is not my intention to think, I have hit right, for I may be mistaken ; But that, whereof I can assure you, is, that I will say nothing, which I have not often experienced. Whether it be well, or ill, *your Reverence* will discern, and advertise me. I suppose *your Reverence* will like, that I begin, at the first, to Treat of things Supernatural ; for, Devotion, Tenderness, Tears, and Meditations, which we can here, with the help of our Lord, acquire, are already understood.

The First Prayer, which, to my thinking, I perceived to be Supernatural, (so I call that, which cannot by humane Industry, and Diligence, be gotten, though very much endeavoured ; yet one may, by the Grace of God, dispose himself well for it, which imports very much) is, a Presence of God, which is no Vision in any wise, save that it seems, that every time (at least when one suffers no Aridity) that a Person would recommend himself to his Divine Majesty, though even by Vocal Prayer, he finds Him.

The Second is an Internal Recollection, which is perceived in the Soul ; where, it seems, that she hath within her self other Senses ; as, abroad, the exterior ; and it seems, that she would, by a retreating into her self, sequester her self from Exteriour tumults, which, she perceiving to Recoil back sometimes upon her, she hath a mind to shut her Eyes, and not see, nor hear, nor understand, save that only, wherein she is then employed, which is a power to converse with God, perfectly alone. Here no Sense, or Faculty is lost ; for, all is preserved entire in its Essence, but to be employed on God.

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And this he, whom our Lord shall bestow it on, will easily understand; otherwise, to make it understood, there will need many words, and comparisons.

From this Recollection arises sometimes a quiet, and an internal Peace very delicious; for, the Soul is in such a condition, that it seems to her, she wants nothing; and even speaking is troublesome to her; she would do nothing but love; this usually lasts her for a little while, and sometimes longer.

From this Prayer useth to proceed a Sleep, as they call it, of the Powers, which are neither abforpt, nor suspended so far, as that it may be termed a Rapt, nor yet is here an entire Union. Sometimes, yea even often, the Soul knows, that only the Will is united, and sufficiently understands (I mean, according to what seems) that it is wholly employed on God, and sees the defects of its being able to continue, and labour in any thing else; and the other two Faculties remain free from businesse, and works of the service of God; and in fine, *Martha* and *Mary*, here go both together. I asked Father *Francis Borgia* General of the Society of Jesus, whether this might be a Delusion, because it made me go about as it were distracted, and dozed; and he told me, it fell out so many times,

When it is an Union of all the Faculties, it is much different; for, the Soul cannot prosecute any external business; since it happens, that the Understanding is in a manner stupid; the Will loves more, than according to what she knows; but she neither knows, whether she loves, nor what is done then, so, as to be able to express it; nor is the Memory (in my opinion) or the Understanding at all exercised; nor are the Senses then awake, but as one, that hath lost them, the more to employ the Soul on what she enjoys: So that it seems to me, that for that short space they are lost. It quickly passeth away; but, by the riches of Humility, and other Vertues, and Desires, left in the Soul, is perceived the great good, which it gets by that favour; but, what a thing it is, cannot be expressed; because, though the Soul is allowed to understand it, yet she knows not how, she understands it, nor, in my opinion, to express it.

If this [Union] be of the true, it is the greatest Favour, that our Lord bestows in this spiritual way, at least one of the greatest, except that of Raps, and of Suspensions. For, a Rapt, and Suspension, to my thinking, is all one; but I am wot to call it a Suspension, to avoid the word *Rapt*, because it affrights people. And indeed this Union, but now mentioned, may be termed also a Suspension.

The difference between it [*Union*] and a *Rapt*, is this, that a *Rapt* lasts longer, and is more discerned in the Exterior; because it stops the Breath, so that one can neither Speak, nor open their Eyes. Now, though this very thing happens in *Union*, yet in a *Rapt* it is more violent; for, the natural heat goes away, *I* know not whither; so that, when the *Rapt* is great, (for, in all these sorts of Prayer, there is more, and less) when, I say, it is great; the Hands grow cold, and sometimes as stiff as are sticks; and it so befalls the Body, that, as the *Rapt* finds it, either standing, or kneeling, just so it continues: And so great is the delight, wherewith the Soul is employed about that, which our Lord represents to her, that, it seems, she forgets to animate the Body, which she leaves abandoned; and, if it last, the Nerves afterward by the defect [of Spirits] feel it. It seems to me, that here God will have the Soul understand more, than that, which she enjoys in the *Union*; and thereupon very usually in a *Rapt* some things of his Majesty are discovered to her; and the Effects, which are left in the Soul, are great; such as are the Forgetting of it self, out of the desire, that this so great a God, and Lord, might be known, and praised. In my judgment, if the *Rapt* be from God; the Soul cannot continue without the knowing manifestly, that here she can do nothing, as also her own Misery, and Ingratitude, for not having served him, who of his meer Bounty doth her so great a favour; for, the delight, and suavity exceeds, without comparison, all that, whereto it can here be resembled; so that, did not the remembrance thereof go away, she would have a continual abhorrence of the contents here; Whereupon she comes to account as vile all the things of the World. The difference between that which *I* called a *Suspension*, and a *Rapt*, is, that in a *Suspension* one goes by little and little dying to these External things; and losing the Senses, and living to God: A *Rapt* comes by a meer intimation, which his Majesty gives in the most intimous Recess of the Soul, with such celerity, that she thinks, she is ravished up above her self, and that the is going out of the Body. So that there needs courage in the beginning, to cast her self into the Arms of God, and resign unto him, to carry her whither-soever his pleasure shall be; for, till his Majesty settles her in peace there, where he pleaseth to elevate her (elevate her, *I* say, for the understanding of high matters) for certain she needs, in the beginnings, to be very resolute even to die for him; since the poor Soul knows not what will be the issue; *I* say, in the beginnings, After this, to my thinking, the Virtues become stronger, because

because the Soul is more disengaged from Creatures, and more prepared, by understanding the Power of this great God, to fear, and love him ; since He so powerfully, without her being able to resist him, ravisheth the Soul, as true Lord thereof. There remains in her a great Sorrow for the having offended him ; and a Wondering, how she had the boldness to displease so great a Majesty ; and an extraordinary anxiety, that there were none to offend him, but that all might praise him. Hence, I conceive, must needs arise those vehement Desires for the Salvation of Souls, and to have some share therein, and that this God may be praised, as he deserves to be.

Flight of Spirit is a thing (I know not how to express it) that ascends from the most intimous profundity of the Soul. I remember only this Comparison, which I used, where your Reverence knows, these, and other sorts of Prayer are declared at large, (and my Memory is so bad, that it soon forgets) ; It seems to me, that the Soul, and the Spirit are one and the same thing, except that, as a Fire, if it be great, and disposing it self to burn, when a little more kindled, produceth a Flame, which ascends up on high, and is as truly Fire, as that below ; nor, because this Flame riseth aloft, ceaseth the Fire below to remain Fire ; So the Soul ; by the disposition which it hath [from conversing] with God, there seems to proceed from it a thing so very suddenly, and so exceeding subtle, as that it mounts upward to the Superior Part, and passeth whither our Lord pleaseth, for it cannot be further explain'd ; and it seems to be a Flight, which I know not what to compare to ; But I know well, it is very manifestly understood, and discerned, and cannot possibly be hindered. This little Bird seems escaped from this flesh, and from the Cage of this Body, and so can more freely employ her self on that, which our Lord gives her. That, which the Soul understands here, is a thing so delicate, and so precious, that she doth not conceive there is any illusion in it, nor in any of these things, whilst they are in doing. Afterward fears are raised, by the receivers weakness, conceiving in every thing cause to fear ; though, in the Interior of the Soul, there remains a Certainty, and Security, wherewith she may live quiet ; yet not altogether, so, as to neglect the using a care not to be abused, and deluded.

An *Impetus* I call a sudden Desire, that somtimes, or most-what, ariseth in the Soul, without Prayer going before, upon a sudden Remembrance of her being absent from God, or upon certain Words, perceived to this purpose. This Remembrance is so powerful, &c of such force

force somtimes, that it seems in an instant to take away the Reason, as when unexpectedly One hears some very sad news, not known before; or one is very strongly assaulted; so that it takes from the Understanding all power of discoursing for ones consolation, and one remains astonished. So it falls out here; save that the affliction is for such a cause, that there remains in the Soul a knowledg, that it is a happiness to dye for it. Hence it comes, that, whatever the Soul at the present can think on, it is for its greater torment, and that our Lord is not pleased, that her whole essence and being, should give her any content; nor is it his will, she should remember, even that she lives; but she imagines, she is in a vast Solitude, and desertion of every thing, in such sort, as cannot be expressed; for, all the World and the things thereof cause her affliction, and no Creature is company for her, nor would she any thing else but the Creator, which she seeth is impossible, unless she dye; and, being forbid to kill her self, she dies with the longing to dye; so that she is really in danger of death, and sees her self as it were hanging betwixt Heaven and Earth, nor knows she what to do with her self. And by little and little God gives the Soul a knowledg of himself, that she may see her loss, after so strange a manner, as cannot be expressed; for, there is none upon earth, at least of all those that I have passed through, that equals it. Which, though it last but half an hour, it leaves the Body so bruised, and the Nerves so relaxed, and with so excessive pains, that even the Hands have not the strength left in them to be able to write. Of all this she feels nothing; whilst she continues suffering this *Impetuosity*, she hath enough to do to endure her Interior; nor do I believe, she would even feel very acute Torments. Yet she enjoys all her Senses, and can Speak, and See, but not Walk; for, the great Stroke of Love depresther. This, though one would dye with the desire of having it, unless God gives it, availes nothing. It leaves very great effects and advantages in the Soul. Some Learned men say, it is one thing, others another; none blame it. Father *Avila* writ to me, that it was good; and so say all. The Soul knows well, it is a high Favour of our Lord. Should it happen often, Life would last but a little while. The usual *Impetus* is, when this Desire of serving God comes with a great Tenderness, and Tears, [Longing] to go out of this *Exile*; but, the Soul being at liberty to consider, that it is Gods will, that she live still in the Body, hereupon is comforted, and offers him her Life; beseeching him, it may be only for his Glory, and so it passeth.

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Another way of Prayer very ordinary is a kind of *Wound*, that the Soul thinks she is struck to the Heart with a Part. This puts her to a great Pain (that makes her complain); but a Pain so delicious, as she would never be without. This Pain is not in the sense; nor is it a material Wound, but in the Interior of the Soul, without the appearance of any Corporal pain; but because it cannot be made intelligible, save by Comparisons, these here are proposed, which, compared with it, are rude indeed; though I know not how to express it after another manner, since these are things neither to be written, nor related; for, who so hath not experienced, and tried them, it is impossible he should understand them: I mean, till such pain seizeth him, because the pains of the Spirit are different from those here. Hence I infer, how extreamly the Souls in Hell, and in Purgatory suffer, beyond what can here be apprehended by these Corporal pains. At other times it seems, that this Wound of Love issues from the Innermost part of the Soul. Great are its effects; and when God gives it not, it is impossible to have it, though greatly endeavoured; nor can any avoid the feeling it, when he is pleased to give it. So also there are some Desires after God, so very quick, and subtle, that they cannot be expressed; and when the Soul sees it self fettered, so that she cannot enjoy God, as she would, she falls into a great abhorrence of the Body; which seems to her like a great Wall, that hinders her from enjoying that, which she now at present conceives, she enjoys in her self, without the Body's disturbance; She then sees the great mischief, that came to her by *Adam's Sin*, which took this Liberty from us. This Prayer was bad before the *Extasies*, and grand Impetuosities, fore-mentioned. I forget to mention how these great Impetus almost never end, but with a Rapt, or some great Favour of our Lord, wherewith he cheares the Soul, and encourages it to live for him. All this, which I have said, cannot be mis-apprehensions, for some reasons too long to insert here. Whether it be a good thing, or no, God knows; its Effects, and the Profit, it leaves in the Soul, to my best understanding, are manifestly discerned.

V I. Advices which She gave for Prayer.

Collected out of several places of her Works.

* See the way
of Perfection.
chap. 21.

1. Prayer is the High-way to Heaven * ; and by Travelling in it is great Treasure gained ; Nor is the Price much, which we give for that, which to our thinking costs us so dear ; for, the time will come, when it will be understood, how meer a Nothing all that is, which we give for a thing so great.

* See the Man-
sions. Manf. 1.
chap. 1.

2. A Soul without Prayer is like a Body that is Paralitick *, and Lame ; which, though it have Feet, and Hands, cannot move them. So there are found some Souls so infirm, and ill-accustomed, that, though of a noble Nature, and of Ability to converse with God, have yet no inclination at all to it first. And, unless such Souls endeavour to know their own great misery and to remedy it, they will be found to become as it were Statues of Salt, no more able to turn their Heads right, towards themselves or their Maker.

* See, Way of
Perfection.
chap. 21.

3. It imports much, indeed all, for one to have a firm, and very strong resolution not to stop their course, till they come to drink of the Water of Life, which our Lord gives * ; come what will ; follow what can ; labour all that we can labour ; murmur who will ; whether we get thither, or whether die by the way ; or whether with such courage to sustain the troubles that are therein ; or whether the World sink under us.

+ Ibid. chap.
21.

4. Though Prayer be divided into *Vocal* *, uttered by the Voice ; and *Mental*, performed with the Mind, that is, the Understanding, and Will, without the Voice ; yet if Vocal Prayer be made, as it should, even Mental is an ingredient into it ; for he, that speaks to God, is to consider, 1. With whom he speaks ; And 2. Who he himself is, that speaks ; that he may learn, how he is to stand before so great a Lord, and what his behaviour also ought to be, as to himself ; and in these two Points is much employment. We ought also to consider, who our Lord Jesus Christ is, and who is his Father, and what that Country is, whither he is to bring us, and what those good things are, he promiseth to us ; what condition of life was his ; how we may best please him ; and what do, that our condition may sure with

with his. Upon this, Mental Prayer becomes conjoyned with Vocal ; for, Mental Prayer is the considering these things. Whence it falls out, * that those, who in this manner Pray Vocally, are very often * Ibid. chap. by God exalted, without perceiving it themselves, to *Contemplation*. ^{25.}

5. Mental Prayer ought to be endeavoured by all, * though they * Ibid. chap. have not Vertues, because it is a beginning for the obtaining them ^{16.} all ; and the Life of all is concerned, to begin it : But it is exercised with much difficulty, unless the Vertues be acquired.

6. In Prayer it is best to be alone, * as, for our instruction, our * Ibid. chap. Lord perform'd it; for one is not to stand talking both with God, ^{24.} and the World ; as those do, who Praying listens to what another speaks, or think on what presents it self to them, without taking care to suppress vain Imaginations. This done, First one should make an Examen * of the Conscience, and say the *Confiteor*, &c. Then, making the Sign of the *Holy Cross*, immediately, since we are alone, ^{26.} procure to have some Company ; and none is better than that of *Christ*, representing him as at our side [or by us]. For, if we accustome our selves thus to keep him nigh us, and if he see, that we do it with love, and that we go on procuring to please him, we shall have him always with us ; and it is a great matter to have such a Friend at our side. Yet I had rather, we should seek him in the Interior of our Souls ; * because this is much more beneficial, and we shall not need to go, with our Meditation to Heaven, or farther than our own selves ; for, this is a tiring-out of the Spirit, and a distracting the Soul ; and that with less profit.

7. Those that make Prayer with Discourse, * meditating on the * See, Way of Life, Passion, or Death of our Lord ; or on the last Judgment, or Perfection. such like Subject ; by so good a way, as this, will by our Lord be ^{chap. 19.} brought to the Port of Light ; and from these good beginnings attain also a good end. And all those that can proceed that way, do find rest, and security. This Meditating, and Discoursing on points of the Passion is the way of Prayer, with which all are to begin, proceed, and end ; and it is a very excellent, and safe course, till our Lord advance them, and raise them to other things Supernatural. Yet one is not always to discourse with the Understanding, but at times to set ones self before *Christ* ; and without wearying the Understanding, let the Person stand speaking, and sweetly conversing with him, without labouring in bringing Reasons, but representing his Necessities, and the reaon, there is to endure him there. And thus exercising himself one time, in one thing, another time in another ;

that the Soul may not be offended in feeding always on the same Meat.

8. Those that cannot Pray in this manner, because they cannot quiet, or fix the Understanding upon one Subject, * running here and there like an unbridled Horse, that cannot be held in, let them set our Lord near them, and with humility pray him not to abandon, but to accompany, them. And if upon this, they cannot arrive to some benefit in a Year, let them pursue it further, nor be troubled to to spend time on a thing, wherein it is so well bestowed: Let them enure themselves to this, and labour to get near to him, and be looking still on him. For, if we cannot willingly turn the Eyes of our Soul to behold things very Ugly; why should we not set them to behold the fairest Object imaginable? Let us view Him then, sometimes Risen again, otherwise on the Cross, or bound at the Pillar, or in some other sort, as we most need. And hereto it conduces much, to carry about one some devout Picture of our Lord, and to look often on it, and speak to it. By this way, if one persist therein, persons are wont to arrive sooner to Contemplation, but it is very laborious, and painful; because if the Will want somewhat to busie it self about, and Love have no present Object, whereon to employ it self, the Soul remains as it were without any support, and without work; and the Solitude, and Aridity, cause her great pain, and her thoughts make great assaults. So that the Soul by this Prayer is either much improved, or impaired; and those, that go this way, have need of greater Purity.

9. Though such, as in Prayer cannot go by the way of Discourse, ought not force themselves to this course, yet are they not to put themselves in Prayer, & there stay waiting, without having first thought on what thing they are to make it: Therefore I advise such Persons the Reading of some good Book, * as a means for settling the thought; and let the Will begin to excite it self, and to be affected therewith; and so, by little and little let them go enticing the Soul, with facility, and artifice, to recollect it self, that it be not frightened; making account, that the poor Soul is as a Spouse, that hath been for many years stayed and departed from her Husband: And that, to reduce her again to his house, and to be content to live with him, she must be very tenderly treated; otherwise, they shall never effect any thing. In using which helps, she saith * : That she was more affected with, and S. Tereſ. l. 4. sooner attained Recollection by, the words of our Lord himself in c. 8. p. 327. the Gospel, than by any other, the most Elegant, and exactly composed, Books.

10. How

*¶ Way of Perfection. c. 21.
Ribera vix.*

S. Tereſ. l. 4. sooner attained Recollection by, the words of our Lord himself in c. 8. p. 327. the Gospel, than by any other, the most Elegant, and exactly composed, Books.

10. How much soever a Soul is advanced, and how high soever her Prayer be, * let her never forget the exercising her self in the ^{* See the Man-} in the Knowldg of her self; for, this is the Bread, wherewith they ^{son 1. chap. 2.} must eat all their Meats, how delicate soever they be, in this way ^{of and her Life.} of ^{Yet chap. 13.} Prayer; and without this Bread the Soul could not be sustained.

one must not therefore always be thinking on this, so as to forget the Consideration of God; nay, by the considering him, one shall better know ones self; for, by beholding the Perfections of God, we better understand our own defects, and imperfections; as White near to Black shews whiter: And besides this, our Understanding and Will are ennobled, and more disposed for all good things by retreating from the knowldg of our selves, to that of God. And, if we never get out of the mire of our own miseries, the stream will always run troubled, from vain Fears, Pusillanimities, and Cowardise, and the Soul will receive great mischief thereby.

11. I desire exceedingly, that all should meditate on the sacred *Humanity of Christ* our *Lord*; and never leave it, for the highest Prayer, one can attain to: * Because Life is long, and in it many ^{* See Mansions} crosses, which to pass through with perfection we have need often to ^{6. chap. 7.} behold our Exemplar, *Jesus Christ*.

12. Never let any quit their Prayer, for any pretence either of Humility, or Sins contracted, or upon any other ground *; for, by ^{||} Life. chap. leaving it, the Soul will perceive her self to lose, and, by returning ^{7 & 8.} to Prayer, to gain and profit; as I have sufficiently seen, and experienced in the time, I left it, and afterward resumed it: And the leaving it was the greatest Temptation, I ever met with.

13. Let none of those, that apply themselves to Prayer, be weary, ^{* See way} of ^{Perfection.} or lose courage for the Aridities, they feel for the present, nor yet ^{7.} chap. 7. despair of attaining to the height of Prayer *. For, sometimes our ^{* See, Way of} Lord comes very late; but, though he comes late, yet he rewards at ^{Perfection.} ^{chap. 21.} once the labour of many years. I have great pity on those, who have not this perseverance in Prayer. Since they are like those that have an extreme Thirst on them, * and see the Water a great way off; ^{Ibid. chap.} 19. who, desiring to go thither, meet persons hindring their passage at the beginning, in the mid-way, and at the end; and so it falls out, that, after with pains they have vanquished the first adversaries, they are still left to subdue the second; and then faint-hearted had rather die with Thirst, than drink Water at so dear a rate: And, if they overcome the second sort, they being after this engaged to master the third, their heart fails them, when perhaps they are not two steps off

Jo. 4.

the Fountain of Living Water, of which our Lord spake to the *Samaritan*, which who so drank of, should never thirst more. And it may be likewise, that, when one half got so far, that he wants nothing but to stoop down and drink at the Fountain, he forgoes all, thinking he hath not strength to reach thither, and that he is not fit for any such thing. Our Lord calls all to drink; he invites all, and tells all, he will give them drink; and I take for certain, that this Living Water shall not be wanting to any of them that do not stay by the way. Our Lord many ways makes them drink thereof, that will follow him, that so none may go away disconsolate, or dry of thirst; for, from this exuberant Fountain flow, some great, some small Rivers; and sometimes rivulets for Children; for, on this manner it sufficeth them; since it would affright them to shew them a great Water. Now, since in this Journey there never wants the Water of Consolation, I intreat them to stick close to my Counsel, and not stop in the way, but Fight like Stout, and Valiant persons to the Death for the thing they desire.

14. It seems to me a bad beginning, and a thing very prejudicial to proficiency in Prayer, to use it for the Gust, or Consolation, one hopes to receive thereby. And I know by experience, that the Soul, that in this way of Mental Prayer begins to walk with resolution, and to master it self in not much heeding, either the being comforted or dejected, whether she wants or receives from our Lord these Gusts, and Tendernesses, hath gone a great part of the way; and let her not fear her going backward how much soever she stumbles; for, she is beginning a structure on a stable foundation. I am troubled to see, and hear, that grave men, persons of learning, and understanding, complain, that God gives them not Sensible Devotion: I account it an imperfection, and a want of liberty of Spirit; and I believe it proceeds for the most part from not beginning with the liberty aforesaid, and with resolution, and their not embracing the Cross at the first.

15. He that begins Prayer, is to make account, that he begins to plant a Garden in a barren Soile,* that brings forth the most noisome weeds, which after that our Lord hath extirpated, and set in their stead other good hearbs, he, like a good Gardiner must endeavour, that these plants may grow, and take care to water them, that they do not wither, but thrive, and bring flowers, that may yield a pleasant sent, that so the Lord that planted them, may be delighted with them, and come often to recreate himself in this Garden. The end therefore of Prayer

* See, *Life.*
chap. 11.

Prayer should be God's Glory, Service, and greater liking:

16. He that in Prayer finds Aridity is like him that goes about to draw water out of a Well to water this Garden, and finds it dried up; and then he must not loiter, idle, but like a good Gardiner do all he can on his part; which if he do, our Lord without water will preserve these plants, and flowers, and make the Vertues thrive, I mean, without the Water of Tears, of Tenderness, and of Sensible Devotion. And though he sees, that many times he lets down the Bucket, and draws it up without water, or cannot lift up his armes to draw it up; that is, cannot so much as get one good thought, yet let him be glad, and comfort himself, accounting it a very high favour to labour in the garden of so great an Emperour, and let him persevere; since he knows, that therein he pleaseth him; nor is his motive to be the satisfying of himself, but the pleasing him: and let him praise him much, for that he trusts him; seeing that, without any pay he takes great care of what is committed to him; and let him help him to carry the Crofs, since he sees, that he spent all his life under it; nor let him, here, desire his Kingdome; but resolve, that, should this Aridity last all his life long, he must not for this let Christ fall with his Crofs. And the time is coming, when he will pay him for all at once: let him not fear to venture his labour; for, he serves a good Master, and one who stands looking on him; and therefore he is not to heed bad thoughts; since the Devil suggested such even to Saint Jerome in the Wildernes. This Crof God leaves not without a great reward even in this life; and, with one hour's consolations, that our Lord hath given me the troubles, that I have a long time endured in keeping my self in Prayer, have been very amply recompensed. But here we must use great diligence to root up the many little Weeds, that are left in the Soil, how little soever they be; and it is very requisite to know our own nothingnesse ||, and the little we are able to || Life. chap. do in this, and in every thing, and to humble our selves before ^{14.} God.

17. These Aridities, and tortures come many times at the first, when a Soul begins to apply it self to Prayer; and other whiles at the last, with divers Temptations; for, hereby God is pleased to try his Lovers; and to discover, whether they can drink of his Cup, and help him to bear the Cross, before he trust great treasures with them, and that they may know, how inconsiderable they are. For, the Favours, he bestows afterward, are of such a value, that he would have them first see, by experience, their own misery, before he imparts them

them : and it imports much, that neither one should for aridities, or for distraction of thoughts, vex or trouble himself, if he would get liberty of Spirit ; and not be continually afflicted : and let him begin not to be afraid of the Cross, and he shall see, how our Lord will help him to carry it, and what consolation he shall enjoy, and what benefit he shall gain out of every thing.

18. Of these Aridities, and Distractions, I have very great experience : they come many times from some indisposition of Body, and change of times, and from the stirring of the humours : now, when they come from this, it is worse to compel the Soul to continue in Prayer, because it is a forcing her to what she cannot do, and a stifling of her ; but it is for the present convenient to forbear Prayer till some other time, and employ ones self either in Reading, or in exteriour Works of Charity ; and, when she is not fit even for this, she must, for the love of God, serve the Body, that it may afterward serve the Soul ; and use some befitting recreation, of either virtuous Conversation, or some other such like thing.

19. It seems to me, that the difference of this Mental Prayer from Supernatural, * to wit, that which we by our industry cannot acquire, and from Contemplation, is this ; That that Prayer, which is made by the Discourse of the Understanding, how much soever it effects, draws Water that runs along the ground, and drinks not at the side of the Fountain ; and since there never wants in this way muddy and dirty things, whereon this water stays, it is not so perfectly pure. So in our meditating of this World, what a thing it is, to the end we may despise it, unawares we suddenly find our selves engaged in the thought of some things we love in it : and desiring to fly from them, yet we are still hindred and disturbed with some thought ; How it was : and How it will be : what I have done; and what I shall do : and seeking again what may help us to be rid of these we incur other new dangers. But in Supernatural Prayer God directly placeth the Soul near himself, and in an instant discovers more truths to her, and gives her a clearer knowledg what every thing is, than by any other way she could attain in many years, and she drinks of the living Water at the very Fountain. He declares his greatness to her, * suspending her Understanding, tying up her thoughts, and (as they commonly say) catching the word from her mouth ; that, though she would, she cannot speak, but with much pain. And she knows, that, without the noise of words, this Divine Master stands speaking to her ; she enjoys, without understanding how she enjoys ; the Soul is burning in love,

* See, *Way of Perfection.*
chap. 19.

* *VVay of Perfection.* ch. 25.

love, yet conceives not how she loves; nor apprehends how she is possessed of such love, though she knows, she possesses what she loves; and that it is not a possession, which the understanding attains to the desiring of. The Will embraces it without understanding how, But afterward, when it is able to apprehend something, it sees, that this good cannot be merited by all the labours, which, here on Earth, could all together be sustained for the gaining of it. It is the Gift of the Lord, of her, and of Heaven, which in fine he gives according to what he is. This, my Daughters, is perfect Contemplation. Now, ye will know the difference between it and Mental Prayer; This latter is that, before mentioned; The thinking and understanding what we say, to whom we speak, and who we are, that dare to speak to so great a Lord: The meditating on this, and other such like things, about the little, we have served him, and the much, we are obliged to serve, is Mental Prayer. Think it not a Cipher, or Language unintelligible, nor let the Name affright you. In this, by Gods assistance, we can do something; but, in Contemplation, whereof I now speak, nothing at all: His Majesty it is, that doth all; and this is his work, as transcending the power of our Nature.

20. As a means to the attaining this Supernatural Prayer, it is necessary, we put our selves upon acquiring the great Vertues *, and * See, Way of especially Humility; and that we exercise our selves in difficult un-Perfection. dertakings for Gods Service, and with great resolution give up our selves entirely to him; this whoever doth not, may remain all his life with Mental Prayer. It befals persons of imperfect Vertues, and some likewise sometimes that are in ill condition, to be elevated by our Lord to Contemplation, for the gaining them this way; but this seldom, and little lasting; except they make their benefit of such favour for the getting out of their present estate, and totally giving themselves up to God.

21. Whosoever desires this Supernatural Prayer, let them not desire to raise themselves before God raise them *; for, it would but * Life. chap. prove labour in vain, and tend to manifest loss; because it is God 12. that must elevate us; let us, following our Lords advice, rather seat our selves in the lowest place, accounting our selves unworthy of that we have, and not desiring him to advance us, but leaving our selves entirely in his hands; for he knows what is fittest for us. Let our exercise be the applying our selves to Mortification, * Humility, and * See, Way of the true disengagement of our selves from all things; since, taking Perfection. this chap. 17.

* Life. chap.

11.

this course, he may exalt us to this Prayer ; but let us always content our selves with what God shall do with us ; for, this is Humility. Let us trust in the Divine Goodness,* which never fails its Friends ; and let us shut our Eyes, never to muse, and argue, why God gives such a one in so few days Devotion, and gives it not to us in so many ; all being for our good ; and since we are no longer our own, but his, let us suffer him to guide us what way he pleaseth.

22. They, that are not arrived to this Prayer, let them not be troubled, nor discouraged, because God leads not all one way ; and perhaps he that thinks of standing low, stands the higher in Gods Eyes. This Supernatural Prayer is not necessary to Salvation, nor doth God require it of us : And they shall not for this fail of being perfect, if they practise themselves in the Vertues ; nay, possibly, they may have more merit, because it is more pains to them ; and our Lord conducts them like valiant Persons, reserving all that, which they enjoy not here, to give it them afterward all together. Let them consider, that true Humility consists in being content with all, that God shall please to do with them : And it is no good Humility to desire to choose for our selves, but leave that to our Lord, who knows, where each one is to be placed. And what greater sign would they have of the Love, God bears to them, than to make them partakers of his Crofs ? It is great gain, not to desire to gain according to our own Fancy out of a fear of Loss ; which God never suffers one throughly mortified to sustain, except to gain more thereby.

23. Prayer, how high so ever it be, ought always to be directed || Mansions, 7. to the performing of works, || by which we may evidence the love, chap. 4. we bear to God ; not contenting our selves with having the Gift of Prayer, and Consolations, and great Favours of God, but doing Actions, whereby he may be greatly served by us, and exercising our selves in the difficult Acts of Virtue ; this being the true sign that the Prayer is good, and that those Favours are from God : And whoever will not addict himself to Mortification, and Humility, and the other Vertues, shall be always a Dwarf, how much soever he uteri Prayer, and shall not grow, but rather decrease. The advancement of the Soul consists not in Thinking much on God, but in Loving him greatly : And this Love is got by resolving to Do, and Suffer, for God. I would desire no other Prayer, but that, which makes me grow in Virtue.

VII. A

VII. AR E L A T I O N.

Made by a Confessor of the Holy Mother Teresa, concerning her Spirit and Virtues.

1. **T**He main end of God is to bring a Soul unto himself; of the Devil, to separate it from God. Our Lord never raiseth any fears, that divide one from him; nor the Devil, that lead one to God. All her Visions, and the like, bring her nearer to God, make her more humble, and obedient, &c.

2. The Doctrine of St. Thomas, and all the *Saints*, is, that an Angel of Light is known by the Peace, and Quiet, which he leaves in the Soul. She never hath these things, but she is in great Tranquillity, and Joy; so that all the pleasures of the Earth, joyned together, seem not to her as the least of those, that she feels.

3. She hath no defect, or imperfection, for which she is not reprehended by Him that internally speaks to her.

4. She never asked, nor desired these favours, but only to fulfil in every thing the Will of God.

5. All, he speaks to her, is consentaneous to the Divine Scriptures, and to what the Church teacheth; and, in all Scholaistical rigour, is very true.

6. She hath great Purity of Soul, great Candour, most enflamed Desires of pleasing God, and, for this, of contemning all that is found upon Earth.

7. It hath been told her, that all, that she should ask of God, supposing it just, should be granted her. She thereupon requested many things of him, and not fit to be related here, because so long; and they have all been granted her by our Lord.

8. When these things are from God, they are always directed either to the Person's own, or to the Publick, or to some other particular man's, good. Of her own benefit she hath experience; and of that of many other Persons.

9. None converseth, or discourses with her, if he be not one much indisposed, whom her Treatment moves not to Devotion, though she mention nothing thereof to them.

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10. Every

10. Every day she goes increasing in the perfection of Vertue, and she ever useth a careful endeavour after things of greater Perfection ; and so, all that space of time, wherein she had these Visions, she hath gone on increasing, after the degrees mentioned by St. Tho.

11. He [that speaks within her] never tells her any Novelties, but only things of Edification, nor doth she ever hear from him any impertinent matters. It was said to her of some, that they are full of Devils ; but this was, to let her know, how a Soul stands, that hath offended God mortally.

12. It is the Devils method, when he means to delude one, to suggest to her the concealing of what he saith ; but she hath been bid to reveal it to her Confessor ; and to communicate it to the Learned, and devout Servants of God ; and that, when she is silent, she may haply be deluded by the Devil.

13. The improvement of her Soul by these things is so great, and the edification, that she gives, that by her example above Forty Nuns, in the Monastery where she lives, use great Recollection.

14. These things ordinarily befall her after long Prayer, and being much absorpt in God, and enflamed with the love of him ; or upon Communicating.

15. These things enkindle in her a most vehement Desire of proceeding securely, and not being deluded by the Devil.

16. They cause a most profound Humility in her ; she understands, that what she receives comes to her meerly from God's hand ; and how little she hath of her self.

17. When she is without these favours, other things that are presented to her are wont to put her to pain, and trouble ; but, upon the coming of these, she hath no remembrance of the other, but a great desire to suffer ; and in this she finds such delight, as is a great wonder.

18. She feels in her self Joy and Consolation from the Afflictions, and Detractions against her ; and even from her sicknesses ; whereof she hath terrible ones, as that of the Heart, Vomitings, and many other pains ; which, when she hath these Visions, all go away.

19. Notwithstanding all this, she useth much Penance, Fastings, Disciplines, and Mortifications.

20. The things which in this world can afford her any content, and the Afflictions, whereof she hath sustained many, she bears with great evenness of mind, without losing the peace, and quiet of her Soul.

21. She hath such a firm resolution not to offend God, that she hath made a Vow to omit the doing nothing, which she either knows,

or

or is told by one that knows, is of greater Perfection. And, though she accounts those of the *Society of Jesus* for Saints, and conceives by their means our Lord hath done her so many favours, yet she bath told me, that, if she knew, it were greater Perfection not to treat with them, she would never speak more to them; yea, she would avoid the seeing them; notwithstanding they were the Persons, that had quieted her mind, and directed her particularly in these matters.

22. The Gusts she ordinarily hath, the sentiments concerning God, and the being consumed with love to him is indeed a thing of admiration: On occasion whereof she is wont to be almost all the day transported.

23. Upon hearing God spoken of with Devotion, and Fervour, she useth to be often in Extasy, and, though she endeavour to resist, is not able; and she remains at that time such before those that behold her; a thing exciting them to much Devotion.

24. She cannot endure, that he, that governs, and directs her, should not tell her her faults, and reprove her: which, when it is done, she receives with great humility.

25. Besides this, she cannot abide, that such as are in a state of Perfection, should not endeavour to pursue it according to their own Institution.

26. She is most disengaged from Kindred, and from desiring to converse with people; she is a lover of Solitude; hath a great devotion to the *Saints*; and, their Festivals, and their Mysteries, which the Church therein represents; lastly, hath extraordinary Sentiments towards our *Lord Jesus*.

27. Should all those of the *Society*, and all the Servants of God, that are upon the Earth, tell her, or say; that she is moved by the Devil, she is afraid, and trembles, before she hath the Visions; but, when she is in Prayer, and Recollection, though they cut her in a thousand pieces, she could not possibly be perswaded, but that He, that treats with her, and speaks to her, is God.

28. God hath given her such a stout, and generous mind, as is wonderful: She was wont to be timorous, now she tramples all the Devils under feet. She is very far from certain trifling Actions, and childish Toyes, that are wont to be in Women; she is no whit scrupulous; and is exceeding sincere.

29. Besides, our Lord hath bestowed on her the Gift of most delightful Tears; great Compassion toward her Neighbours; the Knowledg of her own defects; a valuing highly the Good; and Vilifying

lifying of her self. I can affirm for certain, that she hath much benefited many Persons, whereof I am one.

30. She hath a continuall, remembrance of God, and sense of his Presence.

31. She never had any thing spoken to her, which accordingly came not to pass, and was not fulfilled; and this is a most convincing Argument.

32. These things produce in her a clarity of Understanding, and an admirable Light in the things of God.

33. When some doubted of her Spirit, it was said to her, that she should bid them to look into the Scriptures, and it would be found, that never any Soul, desirous to serve God, had been for so long a time deluded.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

In the First Part of the Life of S. Teresa.

P Ag. 4. line 20. r. which I discerned p. 6. l. 27. r. accomplished in Virtue p. 9. l. 17. r. desired p. 12. l. 25. r. and true it is p. 14. in marg. r. Of Offuna l. 40. r. gift of tears p. 20. l. 15. r. excess	p. 23: l. 33. r. about mine eyes p. 26. l. 1. r. and I continued p. 29. l. 12. r. also much advanced p. 31. l. 11. r. had done her l. 25. r. fear to use Prayer p. 33. l. 39. r. who yet, by p. 39. l. 6. r. Sick in Soul
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p. 40.

p. 40. l. 6. r. till, in saying the Creed
l. 8. r. he ever seemed
p. 41 l. 39. r. thought I made some
p. 42. l. 10. r. inconvenience
p. 45. l. 1. r. my self to Prayer
p. 46. l. 9. whatsoever, r. whosoever
l. 35. we, r. ye cannot
p. 47. l. 23. r. continue in so
P. 49. l. 4. r. here
p. 42. r. 52. l. 12. r. as to consideration
l. 16. r. Prayer of Quiet ;
l. 20. r. as I also did, of
l. 36. r. knows, that he is
p. 55. l. 21. r. *discusses not
p. 56. l. 15. r. are, every one
p. 58. l. 33. r. do it upon now
p. 59. l. 10. writ, r. that I write it,
p. 63. l. 10. r. it costs most
l. 11. r. which follow, the
l. 40. his, r. this Lord
P. 66. l. 11. Garden, r. Gardiner
p. 67. l. 2. r. worth we are,
l. 10. heal, r. help
p. 69. l. 12. r. And, when they
p. 73. l. 18. speak, r. speake
p. 83. l. 40. r. me, so unprofitable
p. 85. l. 21. r. assist the Will
l. 23. r. they sometimes dis-assist
P. 86. l. 10. r. improve so much
l. 15. r. appetite to all things
p. 92. l. 5. r. thereof) that, if
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p. 95. l. 14. advanced, r. wanted
l. 32. r. Mental Prayer ; no,
p. 96. l. 33. r. everlasting
p. 97. l. 9. r. Can they
p. 99. l. 9. his, r. this state
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p. 116. l. 13. r. remains with an
p. 118. l. 14. r. despair

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l. 37. r. well; and he
p. 162. l. 5. r. m'ans? and
p. 164. l. 36. r. and C'nesel
l. 38. r. and the Cavalier
p. 165. l. 36. r. (which, in my opinion,
that strange novelty had caused)
p. 161. l. 9. r. to me no more) to make
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l. 21. r. resolution in me
p. 168. l. 12. r. such thing is
p. 169. l. 8. r. stupified ?
p. 170. l. 9. r. words have sold me
p. 171. l. 34. r. I call these true
p. 172. l. 2. r. may easily be deceived
l. 5. r. which hapned to
l. 39. r. go conform to
p. 173. l. 2. r. than now I am
l. 14. r. easily enough
p. 175. l. 21. r. them sometimes
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p. 202. l. 7. r. assured me b'reof
p. 205. l. 7. r. of a far different
l. 16. r. with all her

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 p. 213, l. 1, r. She now seems
 l. 2, r. I speak not here of
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 l. 39, Marriners r. Manners
 p. 217, l. 19, Domini r. Domine
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 p. 219, l. 38, could r. cold
 p. 220, l. 25, r. near, all heard
 p. 221, l. 28, write r. wrote
 p. 222, l. 19, r. in an Oratory
 p. 223, l. 16, quitted r. quieted me
 p. 224, l. 8, mine, as r. mine; and
 p. 225, l. 5, dele §
 l. 6, r. even affilte one to
 p. 227, l. 30, united r. untied
 l. 36, one r. our part
 p. 228, l. 40, forbear r. forbare
 p. 229, l. 29, come r. came
 p. 230, l. 26, reserved r. deserved
 p. 232, l. 39, condemned r. damned
 p. 233, l. 37, whether r. whither
 p. 236, l. 3, r. so many?
 l. 28, conversion, r. conversation
 p. 240, l. 21, hear r. bear
 p. 242, l. 9, r. I would I could tell
 l. 39, r. before, it
 p. 245, l. 11, r. which Beginners,
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 p. 249, l. 25, now r. nor
 p. 250, l. 12, clearly r. clearly
 p. 251, l. 10, books, r. books
 p. 252, l. 32, r. reading the Letters
 p. 254, l. 13, r. compassion; I
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 p. 255, l. 38, r. seriously; and he
 p. 257, l. 5, ye r. he
 p. 258, l. 25, judged r. judgeth</p> | <p>p. 265, l. 4, r. for it, it was
 l. 6, r. to impart it) seems
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 p. 272, l. 38, art r. are
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THE
SECOND PART
OF THE
LIFE
Of the *HOLY MOTHER*
S. Teresa of Jesus:
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF HER
FOUNDATIONS.

Written by *Her Self.*

Whereunto are Annexed
Her *Death*; *Burial*; and the Miraculous *Incorruption*, and *Fragrancy* of her *Body*.

Together with Her Treatise
Of the Manner of *Visiting* the *Monasteries* of
Discalced Nuns.

Printed in the Year, MDCLXIX.

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Hereto is Annexed,

The Manner of Visiting the Monasteries of Discalced Nuns. : 25



The PROEME.

I Have oft-times found by experience (to say nothing of what in divers Books I have read) how great a benefit to a Soul it is, not to exceed the limits of Obedience. Herein, I reckon, consists the advancing in Virtue, and acquisition of Humility; since this Obedience mainly secures us from those suspicions, and fears, which, during this life, it is fit we mortals should still retain, lest we stray from the way to Heaven. Here is found that quiet, so much valued by Souls desirous to please God: for, if they sincerely resigne up themselves to this holy Obedience, and subject their minds to it so, as to harbour no other opinion, save that of their Confessor; and, if they be Religious Persons, that of their Prelate, and Superior; the Devil forbears to assault them with his continual scruples, and inquietudes, finding he comes off with loss, rather than gain. Besides; the mutinous motions of our Mind, which delight to effect their own inclinations, and to subdue Reason in things, that concern our gust, do cease in us; remembering that we have deliberately surrendered up our own will to God, constituting as a means thereto our submission unto him, whom we take in his stead. Since then, of his goodness, our Lord hath afforded me the light to discover the great Treasure contained in this precious Virtue, I have (though weakly, and imperfectly) endeavoured to possess it, albeit I often feel some reluctance, through the little virtue, I have; which, I see, hath not arrived to the full accomplishing of some things enjoined me. The Divine Majesty supply whatever is defective in this my present endeavour.

In the Year 1562. whil^t I lived in the Monastery of S. Joseph of Avila (which that Year was founded) I was commanded by Father Garzia de Toledo, of the Order of S. Dominic, my then Confessor, to write the Foundation of that House, with several other things, which (if it be published) who so

The PROEME.

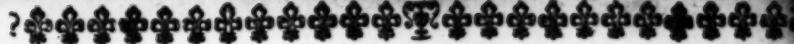
who so desires to know, may there see. And living now at Salamanca this Year 1573. (being eleven Years since my writing the first Foundation) my present Confessor, Father Ripalda Rector of the Society of Jesus, having read the Relation of that first Foundation, and conceiving it might conduce much to the service of our Lord, if I writ the Foundations of the other Seven Monasteries, which through the Divine Bounty have been erected since, hath enjoined me to do it, and likewise to give an account of the Original of the Covents of the Discalced Fathers of this first Rule. Which seeming in a manner impossible for me to do, by reason of the many busineses lying upon me, as well of writing Letters, as other necessary employments in several matters commanded me by my Superiors, I was recommending my case to God, somewhat troubled by reason of my so mean Talent, and so little health, that, even without this imposed on me, me thought I was unable to endure my other labours, by reason of such my natural imbecillity : when our Lord said to me, Daughter, Obedience gives strength. His Divine Majesty grant, it prove so, and give me the grace worthily, and fully to relate to his glory the Priviledges, and Favours, he hath in these Foundations conferred on this Order. This may be held for certain, that, whatever I mean to say here shall be with all truth, without any exaggeration, and agreeable to what passed : forasmuch as in a matter of far less moment I would not lye for any thing in the World; but, in this I am writing, wherein nothing is pretended, but the honouring our Lord, should most of all be scrupulous, as believing it not only vain loss of time, but a going about to cheat in the things of God ; whence I should be so far from honouring, as I should incense him rather : which would be an High-Treason against Him. His Divine Majesty never so forsake me, as to permit me to do it.

I shall set down each Foundation distinctly in its order, and abbreviate as much as I can ; for my stile is so tedious, that I fear I shall, though unwillingly, both nauseate my Reader, and tire

The PROEME.

tire my self: notwithstanding I hope, that, for the love, my Daughters (to whom after my Death this Tract will be left) bear unto me, it may be tolerated. God grant, that, seeing in nothing I seek my own benefit, nor have reason to do so, but only do eye his praise, and glory (many things here occurring, for which this Tribute is due) whosoever shall read this Relation, may attribute nothing of them to me (for this were against the truth) but beseech his Divine Majesty to pardon my so great unproficiency under all these his Favours. Herein, my Daughters may justlier complain of me for what is deficient, than thank me for what is done: therefore let us all, as many as there are of us, my Dear Daughters, give thanks to the Divine Goodness, for those signal favours He hath done me. I believe, that, having so treacherous a Memory, I shall leave out many things of much importance, as likewise mention others, which, not amiss, might be left out: In fine, that all will prove suitable to my slender, and gross understanding, and also the little leisure, and quiet, I enjoy for such things.

I am further commanded, if occasion serve, to add somewhat of Prayer, and of the Illusions, wherein some who practise it may live, and so are hindred from advancing to a further perfection therein. In all I submit my self to what the Holy Church of Rome maintains: determining, before it shall come into your Hands (O my Sisters, and Daughters) to have it examined, and perused by Learned, and Spiritual Persons. I begin then in the Name of our Lord, taking to my aid his most Glorious Mother, whose Habit (though unworthy) I wear; as also the Glorious Father, and my Patron S. Joseph, in whose Houle I now live (this Monastery of the Discalced having its Name from him) by whose Intercessions, and Suffrages I have ever been assisted: In the Year 1573. August 25. which day is devoted to S. Lewis King of France. I request of my Reader out of his love one Ave Maria, for the helping me out of Purgatory, and bringing me to the sight of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father, and the Holy Ghost liveth, and reigneth World without end. Amen.



ERRATA.

PAge 10. Line 4. read clarity.
p. 22. l. 11. r. permit.
p. 23. l. 4. r. our Lord.
p. 28. l. 40. r. whit.
p. 31. l. 20. r. little.
p. 37. l. 9. r. contempible.
p. 39. l. 8. r. did beſteſt us.
p. 47. l. 40. r. reine.
p. 48. l. 37. r. Article.
p. 51. l. 35. r. it
p. 52. l. 2. r. ſhe proceeds
thus: Be confident, if ye con-
tinually beg of God, &c.
p. 52. l. 3. r. infiſts.
p. 53. l. 12. r. the.
l. 25. r. they.
ibid. r. Their.
p. 62. l. 28. r. rigoures.
p. 63. l. 39. r. Eremircall.
p. 64. l. 25. r. ſome means.
p. 66. l. 8. r. might betake.
p. 68. l. 2. r. ſolcirus.
p. 69. l. 26. r. as one.
p. 71. l. 27. r. Ravenna.
p. 73. l. 35. r. You.
p. 76. l. 9. r. deſift.
l. 22. r. what.
p. 80. l. 34. blot out, for love.
p. 81. l. 24. r. [See The
Way, &c.
p. 88. l. 22. r. if.
l. 23. r. ab ut.
p. 93. l. 30. r. thing.
p. 95. l. 13. r. who was not.
p. 97. l. 3. r. would there be.
p. 110. l. 40. r. there.
p. 114. l. 27. r. that Preſence.
p. 122. l. 1. r. to wear.

p. 125. l. 22. r. knew.
p. 129. l. 9. r. ſeem.
p. 133. l. 40. r. with all.
p. 136. l. 18. r. ar.
p. 138. l. 8. r. Hither,
l. 12. r. their Articles.
p. 141. l. 26. r. nor is this.
p. 142. l. 4. r. note
l. 24. r. bear.
p. 146. l. 27. r. commanded.
p. 147. l. 34. r. was not ſatisfied.
p. 149. l. 31. r. regarded.
p. 151. l. 3. r. recommending.
p. 152. l. 13. r. faire.
p. 154. l. 10. r. without that
ſervile.
p. 157. l. 13. r. about.
p. 161. l. 17. r. the.
p. 158. l. 25. r. had.
p. 173. l. 20. r. Ging a little.
p. 175. l. 11. r. without.
p. 176. l. 1. r. Towns.
p. 177. l. 10. r. diſaccommadated.
l. 25. r. were.
p. 178. l. 18. r. price.
p. 181. l. 31. r. ſad.
p. 184. l. 31. r. ſeeing him ſlip
forth.
p. 192. l. 20. r. bath.
p. 197. l. 40. r. commanded.
p. 198. l. 1. r. grant.
l. 31. r. thy
p. 200. l. 9. in the Margent ||
r. || See Chap. 21.
p. 201. l. 7. r. more.
p. 204. l. 29. r. Grott.
l. 37. r. places adjiaining.

p. 213. l. 4. r. let all Creatures
p. 218. l. 33. r. not able.
p. 232. l. 34. r. winball.
p. 235. l. 19. r. preſenly.
p. 236. l. 12. r. inestimable.
p. 242. l. 1. r. went out.
p. 243. l. 1. r. were done, we
were.
p. 245. l. 9. r. ſo are.
p. 258. l. 2. r. You.
Under Line last put,
From Valentia.
p. 259. line 1ſt. to be blotced
out.
p. 262. l. 31. r. Being in a.
p. 264. l. 28. r. reſpite, ſbe.
p. 266. l. 3. r. began.
p. 267. l. 7. r. ſo.
l. 23. r. bumbled.
l. 26. r. contritum.
p. 270. l. 32. r. Foundrefſ.
p. 274. l. 1. r. the.
p. 278. l. 13. r. Thus.
p. 279. l. 2. r. come.
p. 281. l. 32. r. ever and anan
p. 282. l. 6. blot out, totally
Manner of Visiting the Mon-
ſteries.

PAge 1. Line 9. r. underſt
king it.
p. 2. l. 13. r. irremediable.
l. 35. r. for.
p. 4. l. 30. r. for.
l. 32. r. Porterefs.
p. 5. l. 10. r. will deſift.
p. 11. l. 27. r. relavish.

АТАИЯЭ

THE
 FOUNDATION
 OF THE
 MONASTERY of St. JOSEPH
 OF
 AVILA.

CHAP. I.

*The Holy Mother relates the manner, how this Monastery
 of St. Joseph was founded.*



Ur Lord having been pleased of his goodness, to shew me in a fearful, and strange Vision, the place, and punishments that were prepared for me in Hell, had I gone on in that way, which formerly I took up; as also other great, and secret things about the Glory provided for the Good, and Torments for the Bad; I was desirous of finding out some way and means, both of doing Penance for my Sins, that I might escape so insupportable a misery; and of effecting something, that I might obtain so excessive a glory.

I longed after Solitude, and desired to fly from Company, and once at last, finish the sequestring of my self totally from the world. My Spirit had no rest; though this was not a disquieting, but a pleasant, and delicious restlessness, it being evident, that it was from God; and that his Majesty had infused heat into my Soul, to digest some other grosser food, than that it had

ordinarily fed on. I went thinking, what I was able to do for God; when it came into my mind, that I ought principally to follow the Call I had had from his Divine Majesty unto this Order, by observing my Rule in the greatest perfection that I could; and, although in the Monastery where I was, there were many servants of God, and his Divine Majesty was well served therein; yet, by reason of the extreme poverty they endured there, the Sisters went often abroad to several places, though such, where we might continue in all Virtue and Religion: besides, this House was not founded with the observation of our Rule, in its first rigor, but suitable to the then general custome of the whole Order, which was according to the Bull of mitigation. There I likewise saw other inconveniences; methoughts indeed, I had many delights and recreations, it being a large, fair, and pleasant dwelling: but the discommodity of going, and staying abroad, was a main disturbance to me, as that, which I was necessitated so often, and more than the rest, to do: for, several taking content to have me in their company, were importunate with my Superiours to permit it; who, unable to deny them, commanded me to gratifie them herein; so that I could be but little in the Monastery: and the Devil, doubtless, in part, procured my not staying at home: for, whilst I stayed there, much good was done, by communicating to some of the Religious, that which I learnt from those, who directed and governed my soul.

It happened once, that certain yong women, some Secular, some Religious, being in my Cell, and discoursing, that the life led in this Monastery was troublesome, by reason of the too much company; one of them laid to me, and the rest; that, if we were minded to refolve upon becoming Nuns, after such a manner as the Discalceate Nuns of St. Francis, it were also a feasible thing to erect such an House. I, who long since, had the same desires, began to deal with a certain Gentlewoman, a widow, and my intimate Friend, called *Donna Guiomara de Ulloa*, about it, who had also the same desire. She began to design wayes, and means of endowing it with a settled revenue; and, I now perceive, that those projects had no likelihood, though the great desire we had thereof, made us think otherwise. But I, on the other side, finding my self very well at ease in the Monastery where I was, for it liked me well, and the Cell I dwelt in much fitted my purpose, as in a suspense, went slowly on; yet at last we agreed earnestly to recommend this affair to our Lord.

One day, after I had communicated, our Lord strictly charged me to set about it with all my might, making me great promises; *That the Monastery should not fail to be erected; That his Divine Majesty should be very much served in it; That it should bear the Title of St. Joseph, who should stand*

at one gate, for our guard, and our Lady, the glorious Virgin, his Mother, at the other; and that Himself would stand awayes in our Company; and this House should become a Star, that shoud give a great lustre. He said farther, That though the Religious were relaxed in their Rule, I was not to think, He was therefore but little serv'd by them: For, what would become of the world, were it not for Religious Persons? That I should tell my Confessor this, which his Majestie had enjoin'd me; and that He willed him not to oppose, or hinder me at all. This Vision, and this Discourse, which our Lord had with me, was after such a sort, and left in my soul such effects, that I could not doubt, but it was our Lord. Withal, this busines caused me exceeding great affliction, because many of those huge crosses, and labours which it was to cost me, did in part represent themselves to me. And, whereas I lived very contentedly in my present Monastery, though, I had, before, treat-ed of this new matter, yet it was not with such resolution and certainty, as if it would succeed.

There seemed to be proposed to me, a great reward; but, when I saw I was to attempt a busines so full of trouble, Idoubted what to do: but our Lord often spake to me again hereof, laying down many grounds, and most demonstrative reasons, which I evidently saw were unanswerable, and that this was his Will: insomuch as I durst not but acquaint my Confessor therewith, which was F. Balthasar Alvarez, of the Society of Jesus, giving him in writing what had passed. He would not, plainly, and absolutely, tell me, I was to desist from such an enterprize, and suppress such a thought; though it seemed to him a thing unfeasible, and to natural reason impossible, finding very little, and almost no ability, for such a purpose, in that my friend and companion, who was she that must effect it: He bid me treat with Father Provincial, which was F. Angelo de Salazar, and follow his directions. I did not acquaint the Provincial with these my Visions, but that Gentle-woman, the Widow, I mentioned, dealt with him, declaring her having some thoughts of building such a Monastery. The F. Provincial, being a very prudent person, a great servant of God, and a promoter of every good work, willingly condescended thereto, liking it very well, and afforded it all necessary furtherance, telling her he would admit the House. They treated about the Revenue it was to have; for we were unwilling there should be above thirteen Nuns, for divers reasons.

Before we began to treat, we wrote to Fr. Peter of Alcantara all that passed. He counselled us, by no means to desert the busines, and in all things gave us his opinion. Scarce did it begin to be known in the City,

4 when so violent a persecution arose against us, as cannot in few words be described : for it was talked of in all companies and meetings, flouted, derided, censured, called a silly project ; they said I was too well in my present Monastery, with divers other things of that sort. This so heavy persecution, extremely troubled my Companion, and Friend ; nor knew I well what to do ; for, methought, in part they had reason.

Being thus exceedingly afflicted, and recommending my self to God, his Majesty began to comfort, and cheer me up, telling me, I might hereby understand, what great things the Saints had suffered, who had been Founders of Orders ; and might conclude, I was to sustain more, and more heavy persecutions, than I could yet imagine ; but that I was not to make any account thereof. He told me some things, vvhich I should acquaint my companion ; and (vvhich made me astonished) we immediately were comforted concerning the trouble past, and took courage for resisting all encounters from any person whatsoever. And so it was, that there was not a person of Prayer, vwhether Secular, or Religious, who did not oppose us, and think it a strange extravagancy. Yea, such were the discourses, and stirrs, even in my ovvn Monastery, that the F. Provincial thought it a hard matter to set himself thus against all ; who, thereupon, changed his mind, and now would not admit the House. He said, the Revenue was small, and that not certain ; but the opposition very great : in fine, seeming to have sufficient reason to desert the busyness, he reverled the Licence he had granted us.

This was a great cross to us, who already seemed to have sustained the first brunt, to me especially, to see F. Provincial against it ; for, had he approved it, I had in the judgment of all been acquitted. As for my Companion, her Confessors now would not absolve her, unless she desisted from the enterprize ; saying, she was bound to take away the scandal. She repaired to a great Scholar, and an eminent servant of God, of St. Dominic's Order, called Father Licentiate, Fr. Peter Bannez, to give him an account of what had passed (this was before the F. Provincial had withdrawn his approbation) for in all this City we found none that would give us advice ; but they said, all proceeded from conceitednes and fancy. This Gentlewoman gave an exact account to this Holy man, of the Revenue she received from her Joyn-ture, humbly intreating him to assist us, being then the learnedst persona in that place, and, perhaps, in his whole Order. Withall, I inform'd him, of all we had designed, shewing him some of the grounds, and motives, without saying any thing to him about the Revelation ; but mentioning only the natural reasons inducing me thereto : for I was un-

unwilling he should give us his opinion, unless conformable to the said reasons. He told us, we must allow him eight dayes to give us his answer; and asked, if we were resolved to do what he should advise us? I answered, we were: but, though I said so, and, methought I should have done so too, yet I never wanted a security, that the Monastery should be built.

My Companion had yet more Faith than I; resolving never to desist for any thing that was said: but I, although (as hath been said) to me it seemed impossible, but that it must be effected, because I believed the Revelation I had, to be true, as not appearing contrary to Holy Scripture, or the Laws of the Church, which vve are obliged to; and though, in brief, I conceived the thing was indeed from God, and conducted to his service; yet, if that Father, being a person so learned, had told me, that we could not have done it without offending God, and wounding our Consciences, methought I should presently have quitted this, and sought out some other way; but our Lord did not give me ability to think of any other, save this. This servant of God told me afterward, that he had entertained some thought to do what he could to dissuade us from the undertaking (for, by this time the clamour of the people was known to him, and it appeared to him likewise, as to all, an impertinency: besides, a certain Gentleman, understanding that we addressed our selves to him, sent to advise him, that he would consider well what he did, and in no wise assist us) but, that, whilst he set himself to consider what answer he should make us, and to reflect on the business, and our intention; the manner of living, and religious obseruance, we designed; he judged, and held for certain, that it was a high piece of service to God, and must not be deserted: whereupon his answer was, that we should hasten to conclude it, directing us also the order and vway, vve vvere to take; and that, though our mony and povver vvere small, yet in something vve were to trust God: that, if there were any who opposed us, we should send them to him, who would answer them: and thus he ever helped us, as I shall hereafter declare.

Upon this, we were exceedingly comforted; as also vwith seeing that some Holy persons, who had been against us, were now somewhat calmed, and pacified; yea, that some also furthered us; among whom, was that Devout Gentleman already mentioned; who, conceiving (as indeed it did) that the thing highly tended to the promoting of perfection, since the whole ground-work was laid in Prayer, inclined to believe, that it was possibly from God, though the means to effect it seem-

ed to him very difficult, and, as it were, impossible. Our Lord himself wrought this change ; as also he turned the heart of a certain Doctor, a Priest, a great servant of God, the Mirrour of the whole City ; one kept there by God, for the cure, and benefit of many souls ; this man had also condescended to assist us in the busyness. In this condition it was, and alwayes supported with the help of many prayers ; and already a house was purchased, commodiously seated, though but little ; yet for this I was not sollicitous, our Lord having bid me, enter, as well as I could, and, afterward I should see what his Majesty would do. (And how well have I seen it ?) Whereupon, though I saw our stock was small, yet I was fully perswaded, our Lord by other wayes and means would favour and assist us.

C H A P. 2.

She prosecutes the same subject of the Foundation of the Monastery of the Glorious St. Joseph. Relates, how she was commanded to forbear going forward with it, and the time she intermitted it ; some difficulties likewise, which she suffered ; and how our Lord comforted her in them.

THe busyness then being brought to this passe, and so near concluding, that the next day they were to draw the writings ; it fell out, that the Father Provincial changed his opinion ; moved (I conceive) by the Divine Ordination, as was afterward seen : for, there having been so many prayers made, our Lord went perfecting the work, and preparing it to be done after another manner. So, he being unwilling to admit it, my *confessor* presently commanded me to give it over ; although, our Lord knows the great troubles and afflictions it cost me, to bring it to this passe. When therefore the busyness was intermitted, and left off thus imperfect, men were more confirmed in their opinion, that it was a meer impertinency of some women ; and their murmurs against me increased, though all the while I was enjoyned it by the F. Provincial.

I was very much stomacked by all my Monastery, because I would erect another, more recluse. They said, I did them vrrong, and disparaged

raged them; that I might there serve God vwell enough, since there were better than my self in that place; that I bore no love to the Monastery; that it had been better to procure some Revenue for it, than for another. Some spake of putting me in prison, and (some few) others took my part a little. I well perceived, in divers things, they had reason; and sometimes, to pacifie them, I made some apologies; though because I would not tell them my chief ground, (namely, my being commanded it by God) I knew not what to do more, and therefore was silent. At other times God did me much favour, so that all this not a whit disquieted me, but I quitted it with as much ease and content, as though it had cost me nothing: yet none could believe this, no, not those persons of Prayer, with whom I communicated the affairs of my Soul, but they thought me extremely troubled and disordered: yea, my Confessor himself believed it. I, conceiving I had done all I was able, accounted my self obliged no farther for effecting what our Lord commanded me; so I staid in the Monastery, where I continued with much satisfaction and delight: and, though I could not but think, this Foundation would be finished; not doubting, but most confident of it, yet knew I neither How, nor When.

That which very much afflicted me, (and, which it may be, our Lord was to permit, that so, even in that part wherein I was most sensible of pain, I might not want some vexation and torture) was, that my Confessor, once, as though I had done something against his mind, even whilst I was engaged in that violent storm of persecutions, instead of comforting me, as I hoped, writ to me, that by the sequel I might evidently perceive, all was a meer dream; and therefore, that I should reform my self, and for the future, attempt nothing on my own head, nor talk farther of this matter, seeing the scandal that it gave; with many other such like things, all in effect to disquiet me. That which tormented me above all the rest put together, was, that I began now to doubt, whether I had been an occasion, or were in any fault, that God thereby should be offended: since it seemed to me, that if these *Visions* were *Illusions*, all my *Prayer*, and the manner of it was a mistake, and I thereupon miserably deceived, and ruined. This so exceedingly troubled me, that I was all in disorder, and very much afflicted. But, our Lord, who never deserted me in all these my straits, which I have related, yea, very often comforted, and encouraged me (which now is no time to speak of) bade me then, Not afflict my self, seeing I had very much served, and not displeased him in that matter: that, for that time, I should do, as my *Confessour* commanded me; dis-
course.

course no more of it, till the season came for re-attempting the busyness.

Hereupon, I was abundantly comforted, and satisfied; so that all the persecution I had endured, seemed nothing to me. Here our Lord taught me the great advantage of suffering afflictions, and persecution for his sake: for I felt such an increase of the love of God in my soul, with several other gifts, that I was amazed thereat; and this makes me, I cannot chuse but desire troubles. Others thought me much discouraged, and amazed; as indeed I had been, had not our Lord, in that extremity of misery, supported me with such transcendent favours. Then began I to feel stronger impulses of the love of God, as I said, and had greater raps; though I held my peace, and said nothing to any one of these my improvements. That Holy Dominican believed, for certain, as well as I, that this Monastery would be erected; and, I being unwilling to meddle therein, because I would not disobey my *Confessor*, he, with that Gentlewoman, the *VVidow*, my *Companion*, negociated the busyness, sending Letters to *Rome* about it, and designing the manner, and wayes of bringing it about.

Here also the Devil began to procure, that from one to another, it came to be known, or whispered, that I had had some Revelation about this matter; whereupon, some, in a great fright, came to tell me, the times were strict, and, possibly, I might be accused of something to the Inquisition. This I took for a jest, and it made me laugh; for I never was afraid on such an account, as knowyng very well, that, in matters of *Faith*, or for the observation and defence of the least *Ceremony* of the *church*, or whatever truth of *Holy scripture*, I was ready to suffer a thousand deaths: and therefore I answered, They needed not fear for this; since my soul were in a very ill case, if there were any thing in it, to make me fear the *Inquisition*; that, if I thought so, my self would go to discover it; and, that, if I were wrongfully accused, our Lord would vindicate my innocence, and I should prove a gainer thereby.

I conferred with my *Dominican Father* about it, who (as I said) was so eminent for his Learning, that I might confidently rely on what he should say. I then discovered to him all my *Visions*, and manner of *Prayer* and the high Favours our Lord had done me, with the greatest clearnes I could; and intreated him, he would throughly weigh all, and tell me, if there were any thing against *Holy Scripture*, or the *church's definition*; and likevise his ovvn judgment upon the vvhole. He confirmed me very much, and to my thinking, it benefited him not a little; for, though he vvere a very good man, yet from thence forwvard, he ad-dicted

addicted himself more to *Prayer*, and retired to a *Covent* of his *Order*, that was very solitary, to be able the better to exercise himself therein: where he continued above two years; until his *Superiors* removed him thence (to his great grief) as having need of him, being so eminent a person. I much resented his departure (yet would not hinder it) because of the great loss it brought me. But I knew his gain; for, (as I said) being in great trouble at this his going away, our *Lord* bid me, *cheer up, and not grieve at it, for I was sufficiently directed*. His soul returned thence so exceedingly improved, and so advanced in *Spirit*, that, when he came back, he told me, *He would not for any good in the world but have gone thither*. I likewise, for my part, could say the same; for that which he at first assured me of, only by his *Learning*, now also he confirmed me in by the great *experience* of the *Spirit*, which he had in things *supernatural*. And our *Lord* brought him hither at a season, which he saw was necessary for assisting, and finishing the work of this *Monastery*, seeing his *Majesty* would have it effected. I continued in this silence, neither prosecuting the business, nor speaking of it, for five or six Months; nor did our *Lord* command me any thing concerning it: I knew not, what the reason of this was; but I could not put it out of my thoughts, but that it would be done.

At the end of this time, F. *Rector* of the *Society of Jesus*, being gone hence, his *Majesty* brought hither another very spiritual person, of great courage, and understanding, and eminently learned (called F. *Jaspar de Salazar*) at a time when I was in much necessity: for, that *Father*, who, before was my *Confessor*, having a *Superior*, and they of the *Society* eminently observing the virtue of *Obedience*, not doing, or moving toward any thing, but according to the will of their *Superiors*, though he very well knew my spirit, and desired, I should advance still further, yet durst he not, in some particulars, for certain reasons he had; resolutely promote any thing.

My *Spirit* already proceeded with such *impetuositie*s, that it felt great torment in its being restrained, and bound up; though for this, I receded not at all from his commands. Being one day in great distress, because I thought my *Confessor* did not believe me, our *Lord* bade me not disquiet myself; for that trouble would soon have an end. I was very glad, thinking, I was to dye shortly; and felt great joy, when I reflected thereon: afterward I saw plainly, it was meant of the coming of this *Father Rector*, as I said: for, I had never any more occasion of farther trouble in that kind; since the *Father Rector* that was come, did not restrain the *F. Minister*, who was my *Confessor*, but bade him, comfort me; telling him, he should not need to fear, nor conduct me in so narrow a path, but permit the *Spirit of God* to operate freely;

ly; because, methought, sometimes by reason of these vehement impulses of the *Spirit*, my Soul had not room, as it were, for it to draw breath.

This F. *Rector* came to visit me, whom my *confessor* enjoyned me to treat with all the freedom, and charity possible. I was wont to find very great reluctance against the uttering affairs of this nature; but here it fell out, that, upon my approaching the *Seat of confession*, I perceived in my *Spirit* I know not what, which I do not remember, I ever felt, either before, or after, when I treated with any other: neither could I tell how it was, nor by any comparison express it. It was a spiritual *joy*, and a *notice*, my soul had, that, that soul should *understand* me, and *sympathize* with mine, although (as I say) I knew not how: for, had I formerly spoken with him, or heard some great reports concerning him, it had been no strange thing, that I should rejoice at the conceit of his apprehending, and understanding me; but neither had he ever spoke word to *me*, nor I to *him*; and he was a person, of whom I had never formerly had the least notice. Afterward I well perceived, my spirit was not a jot mistaken; for, on all occasions the treating with him was highly advantageous to my soul; his manner of converse being exceedingly proper for persons, whom (it seems) our *Lord* had far advanced; forasmuch as he would make them *run*, and not go *step by step*; and he hath the art, and skill of perfectly weaning, and disengaging them from all things, and mortifying them; our *Lord* having herein given him an extraordinary *talent*, as likewise in many other things.

As soon as I began to treat with him, I presently understood his method and way, and knew he was a pure and holy soul, and had received of our *Lord* a peculiar gift of discerning spirits, which it delighted me to see. But a few dayes after our *Lord* pressed me now anew to resume the busines of the *Monystry*, and acquaint my *confessor*, and this F. *Rector* with several reasons, and arguments, why they should not hinder me: I did so, and some of them gave them some fear; though F. *Rector* made no question, but it was the *Spirit of God*; for he weighed with serious attention, and consideration, all its effects.

At last, after a many discourses and arguyngs, they durst not interdict, nor retard it; nay, my *confessor* yielded to give me leave again to use my utmost endeavours for bringing it to an end. I well understood the trouble, I exposed my self to, being so much alone, and having so little possibility of doing any thing. We agreed, it should be carried with all secrecy; and so I caused a *Sister* of mine, who lived elsewhere, to purchase the *house* in her own name, and fit it ready, as though it had been for her self, with some mony, which by certain wayes our *Lord* procured us,

where-

wherewith how God furnished us, would be too long here to relate. I was very careful to do nothing against Obedience; but of this I said nothing to my Superiors, knowing, that, if I had, all had been lost, as formerly; yea, possibly it would have been worse: sure I am, I did nothing contrary to our rules.

In procuring monies, in negotiating, in preparing, settling, and giving orders for the fabrick of this new Monastery, I sustained many, and great difficulties; some of them single, and alone: for, though my Companion did what she could, yet that, which she could do, was in a manner nothing, except bearing the name, and the owning thereof, all the rest of the trouble was mine; troubles so many, and so intolerable, that I am now astonished, how I was able to endure them. Sometimes being afflicted, I said; *O my Lord, How have you commanded me things, that seem impossible? for, though I be a woman, yet, if at liberty, some good issue might be expected; but, finding my self restrained on all sides, without mony, without order where to get it, without means, or possibility of procuring the Bulls, and good for nothing; what can I do, O Lord?*

Bcing once in a great strait, so that I knew not what to do, nor how to pay some Workmen, St. Joseph my true Father, and Patron, appeared to me, and certified me, I should not want mony; only I must bargain with them; and so I did, having not one farthing: and our Lord supplied me by such means, as made them wonder, that heard it. I found the house very little, and indeed such, as there seemed no possibility of making it a Monastery. I would have purchased another that joyned to it, though very little, to make a church of; but neither had I wherewith, nor was there any means to buy it, nor knew I, what to do in it. One day, after communicating, our Lord said to me; *I have bid you already, Enter, as you can.* Adding by way of Exclamation; *O the covetousness of mankind! that you can think you shall want earth! how oft have I slept abroad in the open air, having no house to cover me?* I remained herewith much terrified, knowing, that he had cause to complain: and so I went into that little house, and casting it with my self into parts, I found, it would make an entire, and perfect, (though small) Monasterie; and therefore took no care to purchase more ground, but only endeavoured, that it might be put in hand, and made fit to dwell in, altogether plain and homely, without any curious trimming, only so, as not to become prejudicial to health; for, this, in all our Houses, is ever to be considered.

Going to receive the B. Sacrament on S. clare's day, that Virgin, in wonderful beauty appeared to me, and bade me, vigorously pursue the work begun,

begun, for she would aid me. Hereupon I became greatly devoted to her: and this proved exactly true; for, a Monastery of Nuns of her Order, that was near, helped to keep us: and, which is more, by little and little she brought this my desire to be so punctually accomplished, that the same poverty, that is observed in the Monasterie of this B. Saint, is now observed in this of ours, and we live upon *Aims*: which cost me no small pains, to get it ratified by authority of the Pope, of whom was obtained a Breve, wherein his Holiness ordered, that it should not be altered, and that the House should never take Rent. And further, our Lord so provides, (perhaps upon the Prayers of this B. Saint) that, without so much as asking, all necessaries are abundantly supplied to us. May He be eternally blessed. Amen.

About the same time, being in a Church of the Order of the Glorious S. Dominic, on the Festival of our Ladies Assumption, whilst I went thinking on the sins, which in former times I had confessed in that Church, and the passages of my evil life, I was taken with a rapt, so violent, that in a manner, it deprived me of my senses. I fainted down; and then methought, I neither could see the Elevation of the B. Sacrament, nor hear Mass: which afterward I scrupled. Being in this Condition, I imagined, I saw a garment of an extraordinary whiteness, and marvellous splendour put on me: I perceived not at first who it was vested me; but afterward I saw our B. Lady on my right hand, and my Patron S. Joseph on my left, who clothed me with that robe: which action imported, that I was now cleansed from all my sins. After I was thus arrayed, and filled with infinite delight, and joy, methought presently the B. Virgin took me by the hand, telling me, that I pleased her very much in the service done to her dear Spouse S. Joseph: that I might be confident, what I had designed concerning the Monastery, would come to pass; and that therein our Lord, and they two would be greatly served: that I should never need to fear any breach in it, though the Obedience, which was to be given by it to the Prelates out of the Order, were not so my mind: for, they would guard us; as also her Dearest Son had promised to be with us; and that in token of the truth hereof, she gave me that Jewel. And methought she cast about my neck a very fair Neck-lace of Gold, with a cross hanging at it, of a huge value. Those Jewels and that Gold, were so differing from whatever is found here, that there is no comparison; their lustre being much greater than any thing, we can here imagine; nor doth the understanding reach to the apprehending of what that Robe was made, nor to the conceiving such a whiteness, as sometimes our Lord discovers; for, all, that is fair, or white in this world, is but (as I may say) a smut with a cole to it. The beauty I saw in our Lady, was exceeding,

five, though I apprehended it not by way of any one particular figure, but the whole form, and all the feature of her face at once : her *vesture* was white, of an extraordinary lustre, not which *dazzles*, but *delights*. I discerned not the *Glorious S. Ioseph* so plainly, though I well knew, he was there, after the manner of *Visions*, that are not seen. The *B. Virgin* seemed to me exceeding young. So, having staid a while with me, who was replenished with jubilation, and content, greater, than (to my thinking) I had ever had, and, willingly, would never have parted with; methought I saw them ascend to *Heaven*, accompanied with a great number of *Angels*; leaving me quite alone, though full of consolation, and so dissolved, elevated, and recollect ed in *Prayer*, that for a time I was utterly unable to stir, or speak; as it were, besides my self, and senseless. I remained with a vehement impulse of being *consumed for God*, and with such like effects. All this befell me in such wise, that, (though I much endeavoured it) I could not doubt, but that it was from God. It left me in much comfort, and great peace. As touching that, which the *Queen of Angels* said to me about *Obedience*, I was somewhat troubled, that the *Monastery* should not be under the command of the *Superiors* of my own *Order*; but our *Lord* told me, it was not then expedient to give it to them, alledging me reasons, why it was no way convenient for me to do it; but that I should send to *Rome*, by such a way; farther promising, that he wvould procure me an answer, and a dispatch by the same way. And so it fell out, that sending by that very way, which our *Lord* had directed me, an *Answer* vvas returned (for otherwize vve should never have had an end of our negociations) which made vwell for us. And for the things that followed, it proved very advantageous, that *Obedience* vwas paid unto the *Bisshop*: but at that time I knew it not, and much less, what a one he wvould be: though our *Lord* wvould have him so very good, and so favourable to this *House*, as vvas but necessary, for the opposition, vvhich (as I shall hereafter shew) fell out in the erecting it; and for the putting it into that condition vwherein now it is. Blessed be *He*, who himself hath thus effected all. *Amen.*

C H A P. 3.

She relates, how it was convenient at this time for her to be absent from the City ; she tells the reason, why her Provincial enjoyed her to go, for the consolation of a very eminent Lady. She discoufeth of the great favour our Lord did her, in making her a means of excusing a person of Quality very seriously to serve his Majesty, by whose protection, and favour, she was afterwards assisted in the business of the Monastery.

WIth all the diligence, and care, I used, that this affair might not be discovered, or known, yet could it not be carried so privately, but that several persons heard of it too much; of whom some believed it, others not. I was much afraid, lest, when the *Father Provincial* came, he might have heard something of this matter, and thereupon have commanded me to desist, and prosecute it no farther; and so on the sudden all must be damped; for I was resolved to obey him. But here our *Lord* provided after this sort : For, it happened, that in *Toledo*, the principal City, above three-score miles from this place, the *Lady Donna Luisa della Cerdá*, was in great affliction for the death of her *Husband*; and her grief was so violent and extreme, that her life was in danger. She heard of this poor sinful wretch, our *Lord* so disposing, that I was well reported of to her, for some other good things, that were hereupon to follow : and understanding, that I was in a *Monastery*, in which it was lawful, and usual to go abroad, our *Lord* infused into her an earnest desire to see me, she conceiving, that she should receive some comfort from me; whereupon she presently endeavoured, by all the ways she could, to get me thither, to that end sending messengers and Letters to *F. Provincial*, who was a good distance off; who, understanding very well, that that *Lady* was a person of quality, being desirous to satisfie, and pleasure her, sent me his order under command of *Obedience*, to repair thither forthwith, with one companion. This I received on *Christmas* day at night, and it occasioned me some disturbance, and much afflicted me, to see, that they, therefore, dispatched me away thither, because they imagined some good thing in me, which, knowing my self such a sinner, I could no way endure.

So,

So, recommending my self very earnestly to God, I continued all, or the greatest part of *Matins* in a *Rapt*. Our Lord bade me, DAUGHTER, Neglect not to go, not listening to the motions of others, for few will advise you without temerity: though you have troubles, I shall be greatly served therein; and it conduceth much to this business of the MONASTERY, to absent your self awhile, till the BREVE come from ROME: for the Devil hath laid a notable snare for you against the coming of the Provincial; but fear nothing, for I will be there to help you. At these words I was exceedingly comforted, and encouraged; I told them to F. Rector of the Society of Jesus, who bade me, by no means neglect to go. There wanted not some that said; it was not fit I should go; that it was a plot of the Devil, to procure some ill to me there, and therefore that I should write again to F. Provincial. I made no account of this, but resolved to obey F. Rector: So, animated with what I had heard in *Prayer*, I went without fear, though not without very great confusion, when I considered upon what account they sent me thither, and how much they were mistaken; this made me more importunate with our Lord in *Prayer*, that he would not leave me. It comforted me much to hear, there was in Toledo, a Colledge of the Societie of Jesus; and, by observing there, what those Fathers commanded me, as I did here, methought I should be in some kind of security.

It pleased God, that *Donna Luisa* was so far comforted, that immediately she began to be apparently better, and every day grew chearfuller. A strange thing, and much noted, because (as I said) the affliction had brought her very low. I conceive, our Lord would have it so, for the many *prayers*, vwhich some good people, that I knew, put up for me, that this affair might succeed well. This Lady was a great servant of God, and so very good, that her singular piety, and devotion, supplied that, vwherein I was deficient. She began to bear an extraordinary affection tovward me, as I likevvise tovward her, seeing her excellent vertue: but all proved in a manner a *cross* to me; for these treatments, and civilities, rather tortured me extremely; and the making so much of me, made me very much afraid. My soul was put upon great *recollection*, so that I durst not grow remiss for a minute; and our Lord was not unmindful of me; for, whilst I was there, he did me most signal favours, vwhich produced in me such a freedom, and such a disesteem of all that state, and bravery of theirs, vwhich I beheld, (vwhich the more, still the more I loathed) that I scrupled not to converse as freely, and familiarly, vwith these Honourable persons, as if their equal, vwhom yet to have waited on had been a great honour to me. I made a considerable gain thereof; and so I told them.

I perceived, the *Lady* was as subject to her infirmities and passions, as my self; and how little state deserves to be valued; which, as it grows higher, hath also more troubles, and cares, and a particular solicitude of preserving reputation, and keeping up the degree of honour, that such persons have; so that it lets them neither eat nor drink out of time, but at sett hours; (for all must go according to their *grandeur*, and the eminency of their rank, not according to their nature, and complexion): and oft-times they must feed upon meats, that rather suit with their quality, than their palate. So that I perfectly abhorred the thought of being a *Lady*. God deliver me from such state, and greatness. True; this was one of the principal *Ladies* of the Kingdom, and yet, I believe, hath few that in humility, and plainness do surpass her. I exceedingly pitied her, and compassionate her still, observing how often she proceeds, and acts, not in conformity to her own inclinations, but in compliancy with her dignity and place. I need say nothing of their servants, how little to be relied on, though she had very good ones; One may not be more talked or conversed with, than another; since he, that is most favoured of his *Lord*, is most envied, and maligned by the rest: an intolerable slavery. Herein appears one of the lies the world tells us, calling them *Lords*, who, methinks, are slaves rather in thousand matters.

Our *Lord* was pleased, that, during my stay in that house, some of the domesticks should become very much changed, and improved in the service of his *Divine Majesty*; though I were not altogether exempt from troubles, and envy; which some, seeing me so beloved by the *Lady*, bare to me. Possibly, they conceived, I aimed at some private interest: and, I believe, our *Lord* permitted, that such like things, and some of another sort, should cause me some annoyance, to the end I should not engulf my self too deep in those delights, and favours, which on the other side I received: but our *Lord* was pleased to free me from all with gain, and advantage to my soul.

Whilst I was here, there happened to come to this city, a very eminent Religious man, to whom, many years before, I had communicated the affairs of my soul. Being desirous to hear Mass in a Church of his Order, near the house where I dwelt, I espied him; and had a great mind to know, in what state that soul then was, which I desired, might do God some eminent service, and I rose up to go and speak to him: but, being now well recollected in prayer, it afterwyrd seemed to me but loss of time; for, who put me upon this? So I returned to sit me down again. This, I think, befell me thrice; at last the good *Angel* prevailed over the bad; I went and called him, and he came and spake with me in a Confessionary.

We

We began to ask one another about our lives, it being many years ago since we had seen each other; I told him, mine was full of sundry troubles of mind. He importuned me much, to tell him what troubles: I answered, they were not things fit for him to know, or me to relate. He replied, that, since that *Dominican Father*, whom I mentioned before, knew them; he, being his intimate friend, could learn them of him, and, therefore, I should make no difficulty about it. In fine, he could not leave urging me; nor, methought I, refuse telling him: for, notwithstanding all the reluctance, and bashfulness, wherewith I was wont to treat both with him, and *F. Rector*, above mentioned, concerning these matters, yet now I had not the least trouble, but was much comforted therein: so I acquainted him with all, under the seal of *Confession*.

Methought he was more discreet, than ever, (though I alwayes took him for a pérson of great understanding). I considered the great talents, and parts, he had, for doing eminent service, if he were entirely devoted to *God*: and this hath been usul with me, for some years, to this present, that I never see one that likes me very well, but instantly I would have him perfectly devoted to *God*; and that with such violent and impetuous desires sometimes, that I cannot chuse but do so: and, though I wish, all the world served him, yet I even anxiously long, that those, whom I more especially value, may do so; and therefore more earnestly petition our *Lord* for them. Just so it befell me, concerning this *Religious man*, I speak of. He prayed me to recommend him much to *God*, (though he needed not; for I could do no other) and so I went away to the place, where, alone, and retired, I used to put my self in *prayer*: There, being wholly recollect, I began to treat with our *Lord* in a way, and stile, as it were, of a rude familiarity, and many times I so treat with him, not knowing vwhat I say: for 'tis *love* here that *speak*; and the soul is so beside her self, that she considers not the distance between her, and *God*; because the *love* which she perceives *God* bears to her, makes her forget her self, and think, that she is wholly in *God*; whereupon, as being one and the self same thing, without any division, or difference, she talks impertinencies. I remember, I said to him, (after that I had entreated him with many tears to cause that soul to serve him in good earnest; for, though I judged him a *good man*, yet that sufficed me not, but I would have him much better) O *Lord*, You must not deny me this favour: see this is a person fit for us to make a friend of. O the immense bounty and goodness of Almighty *God*! vwho regards not the words, but the desires, and affections, wherewith they are uttered; since he endured such a wretch, as I to speak so confidently to his *Divine Majestie*. Be He blessed to all eternity.

I remember, in those hours of prayer, the same evening, I was in a great perplexity, upon thinking, whether I were in the grace of *God*; and that I could not be certain, vwhether I were so, or no; nor because I desired to know it, but because I desired to *die*, that I might not continue in such a life, vwherein I was never secure, whether indeed I vvere not dead; it being impossible there should be found a crueller, and more painful death to me, than the considering, that perhaps I was under *God's displeasure*; and this so grieved, and troubled me, that I even bathed my self, and dissolved into tears, beseeching his *Divine Majestie*, not to permit it [that I should live in his dis-favour.] I understood then, that I might assuredly take comfort, and courage, as being in the state of grace, since such a love of *God*, and other like favours, that his *Majestie* did to my soul, and such sentiments, as he gave it, were not consistent with, nor conceded to a soul that continued in mortal sin. I remained also in a strong confidence of our Lord's bestowing on this person, that which I had requested.

His *Divine Majestie* bade me tell this *Religious man* certain words; which touched me to the quick, because I knew not how to speak them to him; for this same delivering messages to a *third person* is that, wherein I ever found much trouble, and especially to one, who, whether he would take it well from me, or deride me, I knew not. I saw my self in a great strait, but at last I vvas so far resolved, that (to my thinking) I promised our Lord not to neglect the telling them to him; though, for the shame, and *blushing*, I had therein, I *writ* them, and so gave them to him. It appeared plainly, that the thing vwas from *God*, by the operation they had; for he determined to apply himself very seriously to *prayer*, though he did it not presently; and, our Lord, as one who intended him for himself, by my means caused some truths to be told him, which, without my understanding it, conduced so very much to his purpose, that he vvas astonished at it; our Lord questionless it vwas, that disposed him to believe, these vvords came from his *Divine Majestie*, and I hovy miserable soever, besought him most earnestly to conduct him thorowly unto himself, making him contemn pleasures, and all things else in this life: vwhich his *Majestie* afterward so punctually effected, (ever blessed be his *Name*) that this person never discourses vwith me, that he doth not put me, as it were into an *extasie*, and even besides my self: and, had I not seen it by experience, perhaps I should not believe it: our Lord having in a very short time, done him such high favours, and kindnesses, and so entirely possessed him to himself, that he seems no longer to live to any thing of this vworld. His *Majestie* uphold him, by his all-poyverfull hand; for, if

he go on thus, (as I trust in God he vwill, being so vwell grounded in the knowledge of himself) he will prove one of his choicest servants, and exceedingly advantageous, and useful to many souls; having in a litle space attained great experience of spiritual matters, this being a gift which *God* bestovv^s, vwhen, and hovv, he pleafeth; neither herein regards he *sime*, or the *service* done him: yet I say not, that these do nothing; but, that many times our *Lord* gives not that *Contemplation* to one in twenty years, vwhich to others he gives in one: his *Majestic* best knows *why*. This is our mistake, that we think, by *years* to come to the *knowledge* of that, which it is impossible, by any means to attain, without experience: whereupon many err (as I have said) in desiring to *know* the *Spirit*, without the *having* of it.

I say not, that he that hath not the *Spirit*, being yet a learned man, may not govern him that hath it; but let it be understood in order to the exterior, and to that interior, which carries with it a conformity to the natural way, by the operation of the understanding; and, as to the supernatural, let him beware, that he proceed according to *Holy Scripture*, and the *Doctrine* of the Church. But farther let him not intermeddle, nor think, he understands, what he doth not, nor stifle their spirits, since novv, as to that, they are directed by a higher *Lord* and Master, and not left vwithout a *Superior*. Let him not vwonder at this, nor think such things impossible; to our *Lord* all is possible; but endeavour to fortifie his faith, and to humble himself, by considering, that our *Lord* makes sometimes an *old woman* it may be, skilfuller, and wiser in this *Science*, than *him*, though a very learned man: and with this *humility* he shall benefit others, and his own soul more, than by seeming a *contemplative* person, when he is not. Therefore I say again, that, if he have not experience, and if he have not very great humility to underlland, and know, that he understands it not, and that, notwithstanding his ignorance, 'tis not impossible; he shall but little better himself, and les profit him, vwho treats vwith him: but if he have humility, let him not fear, that ever our *Lord* vwill suffer either the one or the other to be deceived.

Nowv, this *Father*, I speak of, having received from our *Lord* this experience in several things, hath cideavoured also by diligent study (being one very learned) to discover, all, he could possibly, in this matter; and vwhat, by experience he understands not, he learns of such as do; besides, our *Lord* assists him, giving him strong faith; so that he hath much benefited both himself and some others, among vwhom I am one: for, as our *Lord* understood vwhat sore afflictions I was to sustain, so, it seems,

his *Majesty* provided, that, being to take unto himself some, who had the care of my soul, others should be left, who have in great extremities afflited me, and done me much good. Our *Lord* hath totally changed him, so that (as one may lay) he scarce knows himself: and he hath also given him strength of body, for doing of penance, which he had not formerly, being very infirmit: he hath made him courageous to every thing that is good; besides other favours; so that 'tis sufficiently evident to be a particular call of our *Lord*. Be He for ever blessed.

All this good hath befallen him, I believe, from the graces bestowed on him in *prayer*; for his vertues are not counterfeit, our *Lord* having already been pleased to try him by certain great mortifications, wherein he comported himself with extraordinary courage, as one, that now understandes very well the true value of the *merit*, which is acquired by the suffering of persecutions. I hope in the mercy of our *Lord*, that much good may by his means accrue to some of his *Order*, and to the *Order* its self. Some thing begins already to be discovered: I have had great *Visions*, and our *Lord* hath told me some things of him, and of the *Rector* of the *Society of Jesus*, that I mentioned, exceeding strange; as also of two other *Religious*, of S. *Dominic's Order*; particularly of one, on whom likewise our *Lord* hath bestowed the gift of understanding by experience, certain things, much for his profit, which I had formerly come to know of him; but those concerning him I now speak of, are very many.

One passage I will relate here at present. I was once with him in a *Locutory*, and the love, which my soul, and spirit understood his burned with, was so great, that it made me almost absorpt: for I considered the wonders of *Almighty God*, who in so short a space had elevated a soul to so high a pitch. It caused in me much confusion, to see him listen with so great humility, to that, which I spake about certain matters of *prayer*, my self having so little, in treating on that subject, in that sort, with such persons: perhaps our *Lord* was herein to bear with me, by reason of the vehement desire, I had, to see him a forward proficient in the way of *perfection*. My soul found such benefit in discoursing with him, that he seemed to have kindled in it a new fire of amorous longings to begin anew to serve *God* with greater fervour? O my *Jesus*, how much a soul all enflamed with love of thee can do! at what a great rate ought we to value it, and intreat our *Lord*, it may long continue here in this life! He that hath the same love, would fain march after such souls, as these, if he could. It is a great consolation for one that is sick, to find another affected with the same malady; it is a singular comfort to see, one is not alone; they much help each other both in suffering, and meriting:

riting: persons resolved to venture a thousand lives for God, excellently animate, and back one another, wishing an occasion offered wherein to lay these down, and lose them for his sake. Like souldiers, who, to get spoil and booty, and enrich themselves thereby, desire wars; knowing, to attain their end, they must use this means. Toyling is their employment. O what a favour is it, when our *Lord* gives one light, to understand the very much that is gained by suffering for his sake! This is never well known, till all things be left; for, whoever adheres to any one thing, shews, that he sets some value upon it, and, if he value it, it must needs be a pain, and grief to him to leave it; and so all becomes imperfect and lost: and justly this ensues of it, that whoever pursues *what is lost*, proves also *himself* to be *lost*. And what greater perdition, blindness, mis-adventure imaginable; than to esteem highly of that, which its self is *nothing*?

To return now to what I was saying; I being in excessive joy upon the beholding that soul, in which, methought, our *Lord* would have me clearly see the treasures he had there deposited; and considering the favour he had done me, in ordering me to be the means, whereby it should be effected, who knew my self so unworthy thereof, I more valued the favours, our *Lord* had conferred on him, and reckoned, I was more a debtor for them, than if conferred on my self; and I rendred high praise and *thanks* to the *Divine Majestie*, because I pereceived, He went on still accomplishing my desires, and hearing my prayers, wherein I besought him, to excite the spirit of such persons. Mean while my soul, already unable to sustain so great a joy, went out of her self, and lost, to gain her self the more: she lost, I say, these present considerations, and that hearing of that divine tongue, in which the *Holy Ghost* seemed to speak, and there fell on me a great *Rapt*, whieh made me in a manner lose my sensess, though it lasted but a litle vwhile, I saw *christ our Lord* in great *Majesty and glory*, shewing himself exceedingly pleased with what passed there; and so he told me, and would have me plainly see, that at such conferences he is ever present, and how extreamly he is delighted, to have men so love to speak of him.

Another time, being far from this place, I saw this *Religious man* born on high by *Angels* in great glory. I understood by this *Vision*, that his soul improved much; and so it was; for he was flandered with a horrible crime, much to his disgrace, and by one, whom he had formerly obliged, and done a cure both to his reputation, and his soul; which notwithstanding he endured with admirable patience, performing other things, much to *Gods honour*, and suffering other persecutions,

I need not, I conceive, relate any more here now, seeing your Reverence knows them; but, if you think fit otherwise, they may hereafter be rehearsed to God's glory.

All the predictions concerning this *Monastery* already mentioned, and others, vwhich I shall afterward mention, both about it, and several other things, are punctually fulfilled; some of them foretold me three years before they were known; some others sooner, some others later, as our Lord revealed them to me. I alwayes related them to my *confessor*, and to this *Widow*, my *friend*, with whom I had liberty to talk freely; and she (as I understood afterwards) discovered them to others, who know, that I lye not; which our Lord permitted me not to do in any thing, and much less in matters so important, to dare to treat otherwise, than vvith all truth. A *cousin* of mine dying suddenly, and I being exceedingly troubled, because he had not time to confess, it vvas told me in prayer, that my *Sister* should die so; therefore I shoulde go to her, and mind her to prepare her self for it. This I told to my *Confessor*, who not giving me leave to go, our Lord often re-advertised me; vhen he vvas acquainted vvith this, he bade me go, for there was no harm in it. She lived in a certain *village*, whither, without acquainting her first therewith, I being come, I told her not plainly the reason; but proceeded by little and little, to give her vwhat light I could in all things: I persuaded her to confess often, and in every thing to have a main care of her soul: she, being very pious, did so. Some four or five years after she had accustomed her self thus, and taken strict care of her conscience, she died, without any one by her, or being able to make her confession. It fel out well, that, according to her custome, it was about a week since she had confessed. I was exceeding glad, vwhen I heard of this her death; she vvas a very litle while in *Purgatory*; it vwas not (as I think) full eight dayes, vwhen, one morning as soon as I had communicated, our Lord appeared to me, and I savv him conduct her into eternal glory. In all those years to that instant, that I vvas told of her death, I never forgot what was said to me, nor yet my *Companion*; vwho, upon the unexpected news, that she was dead, came to me all amazed, to see how punctually that was fulfilled, which our Lord had spoken to me. Blessed for ever be He, who takes such care of souls, that they perish not. Amen.

C H A P. 4.

She prosecutes the former Subject of the Foundation of the Monastery of the Glorious Father S. Joseph. She recounts the wayes whereby the Lord ordained, Holy Poverty should be observed in it ; and the reason, why she left the Lady, where she was : with other things that fell out afterward.

Now, I living in the house of the *Lady* above-mentioned, with whom I continued above *half a year*, by our *Lord's* providence, and disposal, a devout *Lay-Sister* of our *Order*, called *Maria de Iesu*, above *seventy leagues* off this *city*, came to hear of me. She happened to take a journey this way, and, understanding, that I was here, travelling some miles out of her way, came to *Toledo*, to conferr with me. Our *Lord* had moved her the *same year* and *month*, that he had me, to build another *Monastery* of our *Order*: out of a desire whereof she sold all she had, and went to *Rome* barefoot, to obtain leave to effect it. She is a woman of much penance, and prayer, and our *Lord* bestowed on her many graces, and favours. Our B. *Lady* appeared to her, and bid her put it in execution. She so surpassed me in serving our *Lord*, that I was ashamed to be in her presence. She shewed me the *Bull*, she brought from *Rome*; and in a fortnights time that we lived together, we took order, how we would have these *Monasteries* built. And, till I conferred with her, I never knew that our *Rule*, before it was mitigated, forbade all having propriety: and I was unwilling to found without revenue, because my intention was, not to distract our selves with the care of providing necessaries; never reflecting on the many cares, and troubles, propriety carries along with it. But this *blessed woman*, being taught of *God*, very well understood, though not able to read, what I, with my so often reading our *Rule*, and *Constitutions*, yet was ignorant of. When she told me this, I was glad, and liked it well; though I feared, they would not consent thereto, and allow me it, but say, I attempted extravagancies, and that I was not to undertake matters, for which others should smart by my means; for, had it concerned only my self, and depended on me alone to determine, I had not been withheld from it little or much; yea, the thinking that I was to observe the *Counells* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, satisfied me much, since his

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Majesty had already given me very strong desires of *Poverty*. So that, for my own part, I made no doubt, but it was best; for I had wished long before, if it might have been, and had suited with my condition, to have gone a begging, and asked alms for the love of *God*, and possess nothing, neither houle, nor any thing else: but I doubted, in case our *Lord* gave not others the same desires, whether they would not live in discontent. I likewise made a question, whether I might not so be a cause of some distraction, for that I saw some poor *Monasteries* not very recollected; and never considered, that their poverty proceeded from want of *recollection*, not their want of *recollection* from poverty; for, solicitude makes not *Religious* persons the richer, and *God* is never wanting to them that serve him.

In brief, I had a weak faith, not so this servant of *God*. Now, though I consulted many for their judgment on all occasions, I found almost none of this opinion, neither *Confessors*, nor the learned; with whom I treated: they alledged so many reasons to me, that I knew not what to do: for, when I understood that the *Rule* enjoyned it, and saw, it was of greater perfection, I could not be perswaded to admit the having *Revenue*. And, though sometimes I found my self convinced by them, yet afterward returning to my prayers, and beholding *Christ* upon the *Cross* so very poor, and naked, I could not with any patience endure the being rich: and I begged of him with many tears, to effect it in such sort, that I might see my self poor, as he was.

I discovered so many inconveniences in the having of *Revenue*, and perceived so many troubles, and distractions to arise thence, that I did nothing but dispute vvith the *Learned*. I writ to that *Dominican Father*, that assisted us; who sent me in writing two leaves of the repugnancies, and *Theological reasons* against the doing it, certifying me, that he had purposely, and with great diligence studied the point. I answered him, I would not make use of that *Theology*, which inferred the not following, my *vocation*, and my *Vow* made of *Poverty*, and the *Counsels* of our *Saviour*, in all perfection; nor desired, he, in this case, should befriend me with his skill and learning. If I light upon any one, that took my part, or was of the same mind, I was very joyful. The *Lady*, whom I lived with, furthered me herein exceedingly: some at first told me, they liked it vwell; but afterward vveighing it more maturely, they found so many inconveniences in it, that they laboured with me much to dissuade me from it. To whom my ansver was, that since they had changed their minds so suddenly, I meant to stand to their first opinion.

About the same time it fell out, that this *Lady* having never seen the holy man, *Fr. Peter of Alcantara*, and being extreamly desirous thereof
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our Lord was pleased at my entreaty to bring him to her house; who, like a true lover of poverty, having so many years observed it, very well understood the great riches comprised therein, and thereupon much assisted me, and commanded me in no wise to desist from pursuing this my design. So, with this opinion, and approbation of his, as of one, that better than others, might deliver his judgment in it by reason of his long experience, I resolved to proceed no further in consulting others.

Being one day in prayer earnestly recommending this business to God, our Lord bade me, *Daughter, by no means neglect to found it in poverty, for this is my eternal Father's will, and mine: I will assist you.* This was with such powerful effects in a Rapt, that I could in no wise doubt, but it was from God. Another time he told me, that in Revenue was confusion; with several things in commendation of poverty: assuring me, that whoever cordially served him, should not want necessities; and of such want (as I said) I, for my part, was never afraid. Our Lord also changed the mind of that *Licentiate*, I mean, that Religious person, the *Dominican*, who had writ to me formerly against it, namely, that I should not found it without Rents. And now I was exceedingly satisfied, upon hearing this from our Lord, and having the opinions of such persons; so that in my resolving to live upon alms, methoughts, I already enjoyed all the wealth in the world.

At this time my *F. Provincial* released me from the tie of obedience, he had imposed on me, of living in that *Ladies* house, leaving it to my choice, either to go, or stay, as I best liked, until the time of the election of a *Prioress* in our *Monastery* of the *Incarnation*. I had information, that divers intended to put me upon this office, which, with the mere thought of it only, so afflicted me, that I resolved willingly to endure any kind of torment for God, but at no hand could prevail with my self to accept of this. For, besides the trouble, which was no small one, because the *Nuns* were very many, together with other reasons, & motives; I never loved to be in Office, but ever refused it, as thinking it greatly to endanger my conscience: so that I thanked God, I was not there. I writ to the *women* my friends, intreating them not to vote for me. Being at that time much pleased, with the seeing my self out of that noise, our Lord said to me: *Daughter, You shall not neglect in any wise to go thither: and, since you desire a cross, there is a good heavy one prepared for you; decline it not; for I will support you. Go courageously, & speedily.* Hereupon I grieved extremely, and did nothing but mourn: supposing my Cross to be the charge of being *Superioress*, which I could by no means be persuaded was good for my soul, nor yet knew I how to give way thereto.

Of this I gave account to my *Ghōſtly Father*, who commanded me to dispatch presently, and be gone, it being evident, that this was greater perfection; but, by reaſon of the great heats then, he respited me certain dayes, leſt the journey might do me hurt; for, it was ſoon enoigh, if I got thither by the *Election*. But, our *Lord* having otherwife diſpoſed, I was preſently to obey; for I was ſo extreameſt diſquieted, that I could not uſe prayer; and, methought, I was defective in my obedience to our *Lord's* command, and, by being treated there civilly, and muſch made of, became unwilling to go away, and ſo expoſe my ſelf to ſuffering; that I did only give *God* fair *words*: and, ſince I might live where was greater perfection, wherefore did I neglect it? for, if I died in the way, well, and good. To this was added a heavineſs, and ſtrainteſs of ſoul, and our *Lord's* taking from me all *gulf* of prayer. In brief, I was brought to that pafs, that now to ſtay, and ſpend time, was ſo great a torment to me, that I requested the *Lady* ſhe would be pleased to let me go; for, my *Ghōſtly Father*, ſeeing me in this condition, already bade me be gone; *God* having inwardly moVED him, as he had me. She took my intended departure ſo to heart, that this proved to me another torment; for ſhe ſaid, ſhe with great pains, and trouble, uſing divers artiſces, and impoRtantue requeſts, obtained of *F. Provincial* my coming thither. I accounted it an extraordinary favour, that ſhe condeſcended thereto, because of the grief it cauſed her; but ſhe, being a great ſervant of *God*, and I telling her, it tended much to the ſervice of his *Divine MaſteR*, with feveral other things, putting her in hope likewiſe of my ſeeing her again, in conclusion ſhe with muſch difficulty was ſatiſfied.

Now I felt no more ſorrow at all about my departure; for, upon my diſcovering, or understanding, that any thing is of greater perfection, and more to *God's* ſervice, I am contented; and the joy, I found in pleaſing him, took away my grief for parting, with that *Lady*, whom I ſaw ſo exceedingly afflieted at my going away; and with others, to whom I was very muſch obliged, and particularly with my *Confessor*, who was of the *Society of Jeſuſ*; and I was muſch ſatiſfied in him. But, the more I ſaw, I loſt theſe conſolations for *God*, the more I was pleaſed at the loſing thereof. I could not diſcern, howv this ſhould be; for, I plainly ſaw, that theſe two contraries did well conſiſt together, to *joy* and *folace* my ſelf in that, which yet diſpleaſed me to my very ſoul: for, here I lived at eaſe, and quiet, and had the conveNience of ſpending many hours in *prayer*: and, on the other ſide, I ſaw, I went about to put my ſelf into the fire, our *Lord* having already ſignified as muſch to me, by telling me, I was to ſuffer a great *Croſs*, (though I never thought it would have proved ſuch, as after-
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ward I found) and yet for all that, I went very chearfully, consuming my self, because I entred not the lists presently, since it was our Lord's pleasure, I should: and so his *Majesty* gave resolution, and strength to my weakness. Yet, I could not, as I said, vwell conceive how this might be; I thought on this *similitude*: if I had in my possession a *Jewel*, or any thing wherewith I were much taken, and should chance to know, that one, whom I loved more than my self, and whose satisfaction I preferred before my own, did desire it, certainly I should rather chuse to want it, than to keep it, because I should thereby please the party, I so dearly loved; and, as this gust of pleasing him would exceed my own content in possessing it, so likevise would it remove the sorrow, I might suffer in foregoing, that *Jewell*, or any other thing I loved; and the content, I took therein. So that, though I desired not to go, both for the convenience, I had for my prayers in that *Ladies house*, and for the not leaving persons, who, I perceived, so much resented my departure, which, because I am naturally very grateful, vwould at another time have served to afflict me extreamly; yet, at present, though I vwould, I could not be sorry.

My *dispatch*, and the not deferring my journey a day longer, vvas of such consequence to the busyness of this *Monastery*, that I know not how possibly it could have been concluded, had I then delayed. O the immense greatness of God! I am many times astonished, when I consider, and observe, how particularly his *Majesty* was pleased to help me to compleat the founding of this little *Closet of God* (for, such indeed I take it to be) and his *lodging* wherein his *Majestic* delights, as He told me once in prayer, that *This Monastery was the Paradise of his delights*; so that it seems, our *Lord* hath chosen out those souls, which he hath drawn to it, in whose company I live with great confusion to my self: for I could not have known how to have wished such for this purpose, persons of such *austeritie, poverty, and prayer*, suffering all with that *alacrity*, and content, that every one judgeth her self unworthy the honour of being admitted to such a place; especially some, whom our *Lord* hath brought hither from the many *vanities, bravery, and pomp of the world*, wherein they might have continued well content, according to its usual *laws and customs*. And our *Lord* hath here so redoubled their *joyes* to them, that they plainly perceive, they have already in this life gained a hundred for one for what they have quitted; and therefore they are never satiated with rendering thanks unto his *Divine Majesty*. Others our *Lord* hath changed from *good to better*: to those that are but young he hath given courage, and understanding, both to desire no other thing, and to know, that (even here also)

also) to live with the more quiet, they must *sequester* themselves, and *fly* from all the things of this *world*: to those that are *older* and *infirm*, he hath granted, and continues strength to be able to undergo such *mastery*, and *penance*, as all the rest do.

O my *Lord*! how evidently do you manifest your *power*! we need not seek out *reasons* for what you will bring to pass; since, beyond all *natural reason*, you make things so possible, as you sufficiently shew, that nothing more is required, but only to love you sincerely, and in good earnest to forsake all for your sake, that you, my *Lord*, may facilitate every thing to us. That saying of your *Prophet*, *Psal. 9. 20.* is very applicable here, *Qui singis laborem in praecepto*: that you feign labour in your precept: since I see none there, O *Lord*, nor understand, how it is a *strait way*, that leads to *you*; I rather find it a *broad*, and *royal road*, and not a *strait path*: a *road* into which he that puts himself in good earnest, goeth the most secure: very remote from such persons, are the *strait passages* of the mountains, and the rocks men fall from, because such stand remote from the occasions of ill. A *narrow path*, and a *bad*, I call that, and a *strait passage*, which on one side hath a *very deep valley*, whither one may easily slide, and on the other, a *steep precipice*, from which the unwary, and never so little careless, fall headlong, and are ruined. He that loves you, my *supreme Good*, travels secure in a *broad* and *noble road*, the *Kings high-way*, far from precipices, and stumbling in the least, because you, O *Lord*, reach him forth your hand: or, if sometimes he fall, yet are not such falls able to spoil, and undo him, if indeed he love *You*, not the *things of the world*; and walk in the *valley of humility*. I cannot imagine, why men are so afraid to put themselves in the way of perfection: Our *Lord* of his mercy grant, we may understand, how desperate a security it is, to pass through the midst of so many apparent dangers, as are met with in conversing according to the *rate* of the *world*, and taking up its *customes*; and that true security indeed consists in endeavouring to advance still forward in *God's way*. Let us look at him before us, and never fear this *Sun of righteousness* will set, or leave us to wander by night, and be lost, except we first leave him. Men fear not to go among *lions*, each of which seems, as if he would tear away a piece of them; I speak of *honours*, *pleasures*, and such *delights* (forso the *world* stiles them) but here, belike, the Devil makes us afraid of a *little mouse*. A thousand times I am astonished at it, and ten thousand times would satisfie my self with *weeping*, and with a loud voice proclaim to all the *world* my own [former] great blindness, and wickedness, to try, whether I could help any whit, to make others open their eyes a litle [as mine have been open'd].

[open'd]. He open them, who by his all-powerful goodness can do it, and never permit mine any more to grow blind again. Amen.

C H A P. 5.

She prosecutes the former Discourse; and tells, how this Monastery of the Glorious S. Joseph was concluded and founded; the great oppositions and persecutions the Nuns endured, after they had taken the habit: and the great troubles, and temptations she her self met with: how also our Lord brought her out of all with victory, to his glory and praise.

Being now got out of that City, I went very chearfully on my journey, refolving most willingly to suffer whatever our Lord's pleasure was. The same evening, that I came hither, were brought the letters, and the Breve from Rome for erecting the Monastery: to that I, and they also that knew, how much our Lord hastened my coming, were astonished, when they saw the great need there was of it, and the *conjecture*, wherein our Lord brought me to this place. For here I found the Bishop, and the holy man Fr. Peter of Alcantara, and that other Gentleman, a great servant of God, at whose house this holy man lodged; for he was a person vvhom the servants of God were wont to be hospitably, and courteously entertained. These two prevailed with the Bishop, to admit the Monastery, vwhich, having no revenue, was no small favour; but he was such a friend to those, whom he saw so resolute in God's service, that he soon consented to the furthering thereof. And the holy old man Fr. Peter was he, that, upon the point, did all; who, approving, and commanding it to all, laboured exceedingly sometimes with one, sometimes with another, to promote it. Had not I come, as I said, in so fit a season, I cannot imagine, how it could have been effected; for this holy man staid but a little while here, (as I take it, not full eight daies, and in that time very sickly) and soon after our Lord took him to himself. It seems his Majestie was pleased to preserve him alive, till he had finished this busyness; for it was a long time (I know not, whether more than two years) sittie he had been ill. All was carried with great secrecie, for, unless it had been so, nothing

thing could have been done, the people so disgusted it, as was afterward seen.

It fell out by the providence, and disposal of our Lord, that my *Kinsman* [who lived in the *House*] sickened, his wife being from home, and that so dangerously, that leave was granted me to go and take care of him; and, upon this occasion, nothing came to light, though there wanted not some, who had a kind of jealousy, but not an absolute belief, of the thing. It was a great wonder, he lay no longer sick, than was needful for the business, and, when it was requisite, he should recover (that I might be quit of my attendance, and the house left clear, and empty) our Lord on a sudden restored him to health; so that he himself admired it. I found great difficulty in labouring sometimes with one, sometimes with another, to get the *Monastery* admitted; besides, I exceedingly hastened the sick man, now recovered, to clear the house; and the *Masons*, and *Carpenters* to finish it with all speed, in such sort at least, as that it might retain the form of a *Monastery*; for, to the compleating thereof, a good deal was wanting. My Companion, the *Widow*, was not here (for, we thought it best, she should be far-off, the more to disguise things) and I saw plainly, that all lay in *expedition*, and dispatch, for divers reasons; one was, that I feared every hour, I should be commanded to return to my *Monastery* of the *Incarnation*. The troubles, I suffered here, were so many, that I began to think, whether this were the *Cross* mentioned, though it seemed a very light one in comparison of that heavier, meant by our Lord, and prepared for me to suffer.

So, every thing being in a readiness, it pleased our Lord, that on St. *Bartholomew's* day, certain *Maids* took the *Habit*, and the *B. Sacrament* was there *reposed*; this *Monasterie* of our most Glorious Father s. *Joseph* being established with full licence, and authority, in the year 1562. I was present to give them the *habit*, together with two other of our *Nuns* of the *Incarnation*, which happened to be then abroad. Now this *House*, (at present a *Monastery*) being that, my *Kinsman* dwelt in, (for, as I said, he purchased it, the better to colour the business) I had leave to live in it; and I did nothing, but by the advice of the learned, that I might not go a jot contrary to *Obedience*; who, seeing it, upon several grounds, conduced much to the advantage, and reputation of the whole *Order*, though I proceeded with secrecie and caution, that my own *Superiors* might not know of it, told me, I might lawfully do it; for, methought, rather than commit the *smallest imperfection*, they should have discovered to me therein, I would have left a thousand *Monasteries*, much more one: this is most certain. For, though I desired it, to sequester

sequester my self thereby from all, and follow my profession, and vocation with greater perfection and clausure; yet I desired it so, that whencesoever I had understood, and perceived it more for God's service totally to desert it, I should have done it with all tranquility, and cheerfulness, as before I did.

I seemed (then) to be in a kind of glory, to see the most Holy Sacrament placed on the Altar, and shelter afforded to four poor Orphans (for they were admitted without a dowry) and they great servants of God: for, this was designed at the beginning, that such persons should be taken in, who, by their example, might prye a foundation to this new edifice, and that we might achieve our main end, of much perfection, and prayer: from whence might be continued a work, which I knew would tend to the service of our Lord, and the honour of the Habit of his Glorious Mother: for this was my chief desire, and care. Besides, it yielded me great consolation, to see that effected, which our Lord so strictly had enjoynd me, and one church more in this city, under the Title of my glorious Father S. Joseph, than formerly had been. Note that I, for my part, seemed to have done any thing thereto, for I never had, nor have yet, such a thought; conceiving alwayes, that it was our Lord who did all; and that Title, which I for my share had effected, I know vwas attended with so many imperfections, that, I find, I rather deserved blame and censure, than acceptance, and applause: but it satisfied, and pleased me much to consider, that his Majestie had made use of me, being so very bad, for the instrument of so noble a work: and hereat I was lo transported with joy, that I was as it were, besides my self improved by prayer.

All this ended, some three or four hours after, as I conceive, the Devil made a fierce spiritual assault upon me, after the manner following: He suggested a doubt to me, whether what I did, were not peradventure ill done; whether I entrenched not on Obedience, in attempting it, without a command from Father Provincial (for I imagined he would take some offence at my subjecting it to the Ordinary of the place, before I had acquainted him therewith; although, on the other side, since he was unwilling to admit it, [as it was designed], and I had no way changed it afterward, I thought he would not much care): the Devil likewise made me question, whether, possibly, those that lived here in such austerity, would afterward like it; whether they might not want *visitators*, whether it were not a fond extravagancie; and who put me upon it? had I not a Monasterie of mine own? In fine, the charge, our Lord had given me, the many judgments of others, whom I consulted, the Prayers made:

made, (for, for above two years I did almost nothing else) were now all clean vanished out of my mind, as though there had never been any such thing: and only I remembered, how it was my fancy. All virtues, and even Faith its self, stood now suspended in me, so as I had not the power to exercise one of them, or defend my self from these blowvs. He likewise represented to me, Why would I thus my self up in a Monasterie so strict, having so many infirmities? How should I be able to endure so great penance, and quit a Hous so spacious and pleasant, where I had lived so contentedly, and had so many friends? that perhaps here would not prove to my mind; that I obliged my self to too much; that possibly I might grovve into despair; and that, it may be, the Devil instigated me thereto, to bereave me of my peace, and quiet; whereupon I should be disabled for continuing my prayer, being thus disturbed, and at last lose my soul. These and the like things the Devil presented before me all together, so, as I had no power to think on any thing else; and that with such an heaviness, obscurity, and darkness in my soul, as I know not how to expreſs, much less to exaggerate. Finding my self thus, I went to visit the B. Sacrament, though I was not able to recommend my self thereto, being in an agony methought like one in the pangs of death. To communicate this to any, I neither durst, nor might, because I had not as yet a Confessor assigned me.

¶ O my Jesu, and vwhat a miserable life this is; vwherein is no secure contentement, nor any thing vwithout change! But just now I was so very glad, that, methought, I would not have exchanged my content vwith any one alive; and instantly the same thing vwhich caused that, so tormented me, that I knew not vwhat to do. O, did vye narrowly obſerve this paſſages of this life of ours, every one by experience vwould ſee, how little he ought to eſteem either its joyes, or ſorrows. Certainly this was one of the strongest, and sharpest encounters, I ever met with in all my life. It seems, my spirit preſaged the very much, I was ſhortly to ſuffer, though it amounted not to ſo much as this, ſhould it have lasted. But our Lord left not his poor servant in diſtreſs; for he ever ſupported me in tribulations, and ſo he did in this; and he afforded me a little light to discern, it was a temptation of the Devil, and to understand the truth, that indeed he did all this, to terrify me with his lies. Whereupon I began to call to mind the strong reſolutions, I had made of ſerving God, and the deſires I had of ſuffering for his ſake: and I conſidered, that, if I meant to put them in execution, I muſt not ſeek after eaſe; that, if I found troublē, there would be merit too; and that, if I, to please, and honour God, undertook them, this might ſerve me instead of

of Purgatory. What was I afraid of? Since, if I defiled crosses, these were good great ones; and the more opposition, still the more gain: And why wanted I courage to serve one, to whom I was so much obliged? With these and other considerations, offering violence to my self, I promised before the most Holy Sacrament, to do my uttermost for procuring a Licence, to dwelt in this Monastery; and, in case with good conscience I might, *Vomperpetual clausure*. As I was doing, and saying this, presently in the very instant the Devil vanished, and I remained satisfied, and quiet, and so have continued ever since. All that is observed in this House, about *Clausure*, *Penance*, and other *Austerities*, is in fine become pleasant, and little, or nothing; on the other side, the content here is so great, that I sometimes think, what thing in the whole earth I could have chosen, either more, or indeed so much savoury, and delicious. I know not, whether this be not partly the cause, I have better health, than ever; or whether, because there was both necessity, and reason, I should do, what all the rest did, our Lord would therefore bestow this consolation upon me, to enable me to do it, though with pain; which ability of mine, all those, who know my infirmities, do admire. Blessed be He, who gives all, and to whose power every thing is possible.

I went away very weary from this combate, laughing to my self at the Devil, for I plainly saw, it was he. I believe our Lord permitted it (since in Twenty eight years space, and more, that I have worn this habit, I never, even for a moment, knew, what a thing discontent, and sadness for being a religious woman meant;) to the end I might understand the signal favour He had done me herein, and what a torment he had freed me from: And withal, that in case I should see any of the rest in like condition, I should not wonder, but rather compassionate her, and be able to comfort her.

Having passed this brunt, and desiring to take a little rest after Dinner (for I had almost none all the night before, and several other nights wanted not for cares, and troubles, besides the great weariness of all the precedent days) when it was once known in my Monastery, of the *Incarnation*, and in the Town, what was done, there arose a huge uproar, and murmuring, for the realons aforesaid, which seemed to have some shew. Presently the *Prioress* sent me a command to repair thither instantly, instantly. I, understanding her pleasure, went immediately, leaving the *Nuns* very disconsolate. I perceived well, I should meet with troubles enow, but insasmuch as the *House* was now finished, I regarded them little. I betook my self to prayer, humbly beseeching

beseaching our Lord, that he would help me ; and my Father S. Joseph, that he would bring me back to this Monastery of his ; offering up to him whatever I was to suffer : And being exceeding glad, and delirous of an occasion of enduring something for his sake, and of serving him, I went thither, taking for certain, that they would presently put me in Prison : Though in my opinion that would have been a great ease to me, in regard I should not discourse with any, and should thus repose awhile in Solitude ; which was but needful for me, since the perpetual conversing with people left me quite harassed, and as it were ground even to dust.

As soon as I came, I gave an account, and satisfaction concerning my self to the Prioress, who was somewhat pacified ; but they all sent for Father Provincial, and so the business remained to be heard before him : who being come, I was summoned to appear, exceedingly pleased to see my self suffer something for the love of our Lord ; for I did not find that herein I had offended his Divine Majesty, nor my Order in any thing, but rather had endeavoured with all my power to promote it, and for this, would willingly have died, it being my whole desire, that its first Institution, and Rule might be observed in the highest perfection. I called to mind the sentence passed on Christ, and saw how that, which I lay under, was little, or nothing. I acknowledged to Father Provincial my fault, as one very guilty ; and such I went for to them that knew not all the Circumstances. After he had sharply reprehended me, though not with so much rigor, and severity, as the offence, and that, which many reported it to him, deserved ; I would not have excused my self, because I was resolved to suffer, but desired he would pardon, and punish me, yet not retain any displeasure against me. In some things I well enough saw, they accused, and charged me wrongfully ; for they objected, that I had done it to get me Reparations, and a Name, and the like ; but in other things I understood evidently, they said true ; as, that I was the worst of all the Nuns ; and that, having no better observed the religious Discipline used in this Monastery : How did I think to keep my Rule, and the Constitutions with greater rigor in another ? That I gave scandal to the people, and introduced Novelties. All this nothing troubled, or disquieted me, though I made shew of being afflicted, lest I should seem to disregard and slight what they said to me. At last Father Provincial commanded me to declare there before the Nuns my reasons, and give an account of the fact : that it was necessary I should do it. So, forasmuch as I was at quiet within my self, and our Lord also afflicted me, I propounded

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my reasons in such wise, as neither the Provincial, nor the Nuns which heard me, found cause to condemn me. I had speech afterward with Father Provincial alone, and informed him more particularly of the success of the busines, who rested well satisfied, and promised me, that, if the Foundation of the Monastery went forward, and the City were quieted, he would grant me a licence to remove thither: for at present the tumult in the City was very great, as I shall now relate.

Two, or three days after, the Gouvernor, and Officers of the City, with some of the Chapter assembled, who all joyntly declared, they would in no wise content to the establishing hereof, being a manifest Detriment to the Republick; that the B. Sacrament should be taken away; and that they by no means, upon any account, would permit the founding of this Monastery to go forward. They appointed two Divines to meet out of every Order, to deliver their opinion; of whom some held their peace, others disliked the busines; in fine, they concluded, it should be presently dissolved. Only one Father Dominicus Bannez, a Licentiate of the Order of S. Dominic (although against us, not for its being a Monastery, but its being poor) said, there was no necessity of dissolving it so suddenly; that it ought to be maturely considered of, since there was time enough for it; that this case belonged to the Bishop, and the like. This was of great advantage; for, they being so enraged, it was a hazard, but they had immediately thrown it down to the ground. In fine, a Monastery of necessity it must be, because it so pleased our Lord, against whose will they all, though united, were able to do little. They propounded their reasons, moved with a good zeal; and so, though without offending God, made me, and all that favoured the busines, (for indeed some such there were) suffer, and they sustained great persecutions. The murmuring, and tumult of the people was so great, that there was no talk of any thing else; and all blamed me, running to and fro continually, one while to the Provincial, another while to my Monastery. I was no more moved at what they said against me, than if they had said nothing; but the most fear lest it should be dissolved, and the seeing those, who afflicted me, lose their credit, besides the great mortification they endured, strook to my very heart: for, as to their reports concerning me, I was rather glad; and, if I had had but a little faith, should not have felt in other respects the least alteration; but a small defect in any one Virtue, is enough to lay asleep all the rest. Hereupon I was much afflicted those two days, wherein (as I said) those two meetings of the people were held: and being exceeding sad,

our Lord said to me : Dost thou not know, I am powerful ? What fearest thou ? Be assured, the Monastery shall not be dissolved : I will accomplish all, that I have promised thee. Wherewith I was much comforted.

Meanwhile they informed the King's Council of the whole procedure, and an Order came, that a Relation also should be drawn up on our part, how this Monastery was founded. When (lo !) a huge contest began ; for, in favour of the City, some were gone to the Court ; and it was fit, that in behalf of the Monastery, some body should go ; and Many there was none ; nor knew I what to do. It was God's providence, that Father Provincial never commanded me to desist from prosecuting it ; for he is such a friend to any good work, that, albeit he furthered not the business, yet would he not obstruct it : nor did he grant me a License to remove thither, till he saw, what the issue would be. These servants of God continued alone, and did more by their Prayers, than I by all my Solicitation, though it was but necessary to use the utmost diligence. Sometimes all seemed lost ; especially one day, before Father Provincial was come, it happened, that Mother Prioress commanded me not to attempt, or engage in any thing about this business ; which was in effect to throw up all. I went to his Divine Majesty, and said to him : Lord this Monastery is none of mine, it is made for You ; therefore, since there is none to follow the business, let your Majesty undertake it, and do all : Which having said, I was in so great repole, and so void of care, as though I had had all the world to negotiate for me, and presently I reckoned the business as done.

A Priest, named Gonzalo de Aranda, a great servant of God, and friend to all Perfection, who had always assisted me, went to the Court, to attend the business, and prosecuted it vigorously ; and that devout Gentleman Franciscus de Salsedo, whom I mentioned before, laboured herein exceedingly, and promoted it to his uttermost, nor without many difficulties, and persecutions. I always in all things esteemed, and still esteem him, as a Father. Our Lord infused such zeal into those that assisted us, that each one took the matter to heart, as though it had been his own in particular, and his Life, and Honour interess'd therein ; being notwithstanding, no further concerned, than, as judging it a service done to God. God's assistance to a certain Priest, Master Daza, one of those that much befriended me in this affair, was evidently seen ; for, in another great Assembly, and Consultation held in the City, he in behalf of the Bishop appeared, where he alone in such sort opposed himself against the opinion, and sense of all, that in the end he pacified them, by proposing to them certain Expedients ; which suffici.

sufficiently served to suspend the design, and stop their fury. But nothing prevailed to make them wholly desist, but they soon returned again, so that they would even lay down (as I may say) their lives for the dissolving of it. This servant of God was he, who gave the first four Nuns the habit, and placed there the B. Sacrament; for which he underwent very great persecution. This opposition lasted almost half a year, to recount particularly the great difficulties sustained in which time would be too tedious. I was astonished to see what mischief the Devil wrought against a few, and those too poor contemptable women; and how it could seem to all, that these should be so great a damage to the City, but twelve women only, and a Prioress; for more they were not to be (I speak this to those persons, who withstood it) and of so austere lives: For supposing some detriment, or error therein, it would all light upon themselves; but loss, or prejudice to the City seemed no way probable, and yet they found these so many, that they with good conscience opposed it.

At length they began to yield, and came to this conclusion, that, in case the Monastery were endowed, they would admit it, and be content, it should go forwards. I was now so weary of seeing the trouble of all those, that assisted us, more than my own, that I conceived it not amiss to take Rest till they were quiet, and afterward lay it aside. And sometimes also (as a wretched, and imperfect creature) imagined, it was possibly our Lords pleasure, since without this Revenue we could not carry it; and already I condescended to this accord. The night before it was to be concluded (an Agreement being already begun) as I was in prayer, our Lord said to me; *Daughter, make no such agreement, as this; for, if once ye begin to admit Revenue, they will not afterward consent to your laying it down:* Adding hereto certain other things. The same night appeared to me the holy man Fr. Peter of Alcantara, who died but a little before, and had written to me before his death, hearing of the great opposition, and persecution, we suffered, that he was very glad, this House was founded with so great opposition; for, it was a sign, our Lord would be much served, and honoured therein, since the Devil laboured to hinder it: And that I should by no means consent to have it endowed; inculcating this twice, or thrice to me in the same Letter, with great earnestness; assuring me, that, thereafter as I persisted resolute, and constant herein, all should succeed, according as I desired. I had already seen him two other times since his death, and the glory, which he had: And so it affrighted me not at all, but gladdened me rather; for he always ap-

peared to me in the manner of a glorious body, full of splendor, and the beholding him delighted me exceedingly. I remember, the first time I saw him, he told me among other things, the great glory he enjoyed, and how happy the *Pennance* proved, he had performed, whereby he had obtained so high a reward. But, because I believe, I have elsewhere spoken hereof, I say no more here; save that at this time he discovered to me something of rigor, and only bid me, *by no means take Revenue*; *And why would I not follow his counsel?* And presently vanished, leaving me much amazed. The next day I soon acquainted the forementioned Gentleman (as he, to whom in all things I had recourse, and who laboured herein more than any other) what had passed, and that he should in no wise yield to the taking *Rent*, but go on in the *Suit*. He was more resolute, and constant in the business, than I, and was extream glad thereat: confessing to me afterward, how unwillingly he spake of any such agreement.

After this there rose up another person, an eminent servant of God, and (things now being in a good condition) with a good zeal desired, the matter might be referred to the judgment of the *Learned*. And here I found trouble enough; for, some of those who assisted me consented thereto, and were of the same opinion: And this was an *artifice* of the Devils contriving, of harder, and worst digestion, than all the rest. Our *Lord* helped me in all; for it is impossible, writing thus succinctly, to explicate fully what was endured in two years space from the time that this Monastery began, till it was finished: only this last, and the first half year were the most troublesome.

In this time it fell out one day, that a *Breve* was brought me from *Rome*, wherein the *Pope* prohibited this Monastery to be capable of receiving *Rent*; and so all was concluded, it having cost me some paine. Being much pleased to see it thus finished, and reflecting on the past troubles, praising our *Lord*, that he vouchsafed in anything to make use of me, I began to consider the things that had happened: And indeed in every one of them, that seemed of any importance, and were done by me, I found many defects, and imperfections, and sometimes small courage, and oftentimes little faith: Yet, to this present, wherein I see fulfilled all, that our *Lord* hath told me concerning this Monastery, I never failed resolutely to believe it; nor could I at least so much as doubt of it. How this should be, I know not; because, on one side, it seemed impossible to me; and, on the other, I could not doubt thereof; that is, believe, but it would come to pass. In fine, all the good, I found our *Lord* had done it; and I, all the ill: Whereupon I for-

forbore to think further thereon, and was unwilling any should remember me of it, that I might not review my so numerous defects. Blessed be He, who, when he pleaseth, draws good out of all. Amen.

The City being now somthing quieted, the Father Peter Bannez, a Licentiate of S. Dominic's Order, made all speed to come to Avila, who also assisted us in his absence; but now his Divine Majestie had brought him in a conjuncture, wherein we most needed him, and he exceedingly bestead us; so that our Lord seems only for this purpose to have called him hither: For he told me afterward, he had no occasion of coming, but accidentally had notice thereof. He staid here as long as was necessary, for appeasing the minds of many, and did much good, by the great esteem they had of his Learning, and Virtue. At his departure he procured by certain means, that Father Provincial gave me a Licence (which to obtain so soon seemed almost impossible) to remove to this Monastery, taking some other Nuns of the Incarnation along with me, and to govern, and instruct the Novices, that were there. The day of our entrance, was a day of very great Consolation to me.

As I was praying in the Church, before I went into the Monastery, being as it were in an Extasy, I saw Christ our Lord, who, methought, received me with kindness, and affection, putting a rich Crown on my Head, and in a manner thanked me for what I had done for his Mother. Another time, as all the Nuns were at prayer in the Quire after Compline, I saw our Lady the B. Virgin in very great glory, who seemed to receive, and protect us all under a pure white Robe, which she then had on: whereby I understood, how high a degree of glory our Lord would bestow upon the religious of this House. As the Divine Office began to be here Celebrated, the people began also to have a great devotion to this Monastery: More Nuns are taken in, and our Lord began to move such as most opposed us, exceedingly to favour us, and give us alms; so that now they began to like, what they formerly much disliked; and by little and little gave over the contention, acknowledging now, that they knew this work was of God; since, notwithstanding so much opposition, his Divine Majestie was pleased, it should go forward: And there is not any one now, that thinks it had been well, not to have erected this Monastery, much less to have dissolved it; and thus at present they are so careful to provide Alms for us, that, without being called upon, or our craving them of any, our Lord excites and stirs them up to send them: insomuch that we live without wanting necessaries; and so I hope in our Lord it will always be.

For,

For, they being but few, and doing what they ought (as, for the present, his Divine Majesty gives them grace to do) I am sure they shall never lack any thing, nor shall they need to be burdensome, or much chargeable to any; for our Lord will take care to supply them, as he hath hitherto done.

I am even transported with the abundant consolation I find, to see my self settled here amongst souls so disengaged from the things of the world; for, their whole imployment is, to know how to advance still further in the service of God: Solitude, and Retirement is their chief delight; and the very thinking only that they are to be visited by any (be it their nearest kinred) unles it be the more to excite, and inflame such persons in the love of their Celestial Spouse, is a great affliction to them. So that no person comes to this Monastery, who makes not this his design; for, otherwise, neither are they welcome to others, nor others to them; their language is altogether speaking of God; and they neither understand, nor are understood, but by such, as discourse of Him.

We observe the Rule of our Lady of Mount Carmel, made by Albertus Patriarch of Jerusalem; and this in all its strictness, and integrity, as it was confirmed by Pope Innocent IV, in the year 1248, and the tith of his Pontificate. Methinks all the troubles sustained for it are well bestowed. For, though it seem somewhat rigorous (in regard we never eat flesh, except in sickness, or upon necessity; and we fast some eight months together; with some other things, as in the Primitive Rule may be seen) yet in many things also, the Sisters account it not severe enough, and therefore observe certain things besides; which for the keeping this in greater perfection, appear to us necessary. I hope in our Lord, that what is begun will go on, and increase, as his Divine Majesty hath promised me. The other Monastery which that virtuous, and pious Woman, I speak of, procured to be erected, was likewise favoured by our Lord, and founded at Aleala; though she wanted not strong opposition, and suffered great difficulties. I know, that in it is observed our primitive Rule with all the strictness, and devotion, as in this. Our Lord grant that all be for the glory, and praise of himself, and the glorious Virgin Mary his Mother, whose habit we wear. Amen.

I believe your Reverence will be tired with the long Relation I have made of this Monastery; but it is very short in comparison of the many crosses endured, and wonders by our Lord wrought in it; whereof there are divers witnesses, that can swear to them. And so I intreat your Reverence, for the love of God, that, what you judg superfluous

fluous in this Discourse, you would cancel; but that you would preserve in it, that which concerns this Monastery, and, after my decease, consigne it to the Sisters, the Nuns that shall succeed; for it will not a little animate those, who shall come after, in the serving of God, and in endeavouring, that what is begun be not ruined, and quite lost, but go on still from *good to better*, when they see the very much that the Divine Majesty hath there established, and effected, in erecting it by the means of so wretched, and base a creature, as *my self*.

And, since our Lord hath been pleased so particularly to express his owning this work, I conceive, they do very ill, and shall be severely punished by God, that shall dare to attempt the relaxing that perfection, which our Lord hath here set up, and afforded his assistance to, that it is carried on with so much delight: From whence it is evident, that it is very tolerable, and may with ease be practised, there being so great aids, and so good provision for those continually to live well upon, who desire (all alone) to enjoy their *Spouse Jesus Christ*; the only thing, which they are to pretend to, delighting to continue there in *solitude* with him alone. They are not to exceed the number of *Thirteen*; for, this, from the opinion of divers, I have learnt to be expedient; and by experience have seen, that, for procuring, and maintaining the *Spirit*, which is now enjoyed here, and living on *alms* without asking, or burdening any, it is requisite, they should be *no more*. And let them in these things rather believe *one*, who with so great difficulties, and the prayers of so many persons, hath obtained that, which seemed to be best. The great content, and cheerfulness, with the little trouble, which, for the years that we have lived in this Monastery, we see all enjoy; besides the much better health, which we were not formerly wont to have, do clearly evidence, that this is most convenient. And whosoever thinks this rigorous, and difficult, let them blame their own want of *spirit*, and not the *Order* observed here; since even delicate, and sickly persons (having the *spirit*) undergo all with delight, and exceeding great ease. Let such persons go to other Monasteries, where they may also attain salvation in a way suitable to *their spirit*.

G
CHAP.

C H A P. 6.

An Extract out of the Life of S. Teresa, written by the Bishop of Terrassone, relating the Primitive Rule of the Carmelites, prescribed by Albert Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Constitutions added by the H. Mother Teresa, mentioned by Her in the Precedent Chapter.

When the Holy Mother left the Monastery of the Incarnation, she took with her four Religious women; for, the Provincial likewise permitted those, that were willing to embrace this new way, to attend the Mother to the new Foundation. These four were Anna de Santo Joanne, Maria Isabella, Anna de Angelis, and Elisabetha de Santo Paulo. Of these she chose Anna de Santo Joanne Prioress, for, the holy woman, out of her great humility, loved rather to obey, than to command. She made Anna de Angelis sub-Prioress: but in time the Provincial, perceiving it was fitter, that she should be Prioress, who was the Mother, and Mistress of them all, caused her to undertake, and execute that office her self.

The holy woman began forthwith to govern her Religious with heavenly prudence, and spirit. She gave them the form of living, which they were to observe, with pious, and solitary advices; and, with the approbation of the Bishop, who was then their Superior, made also Constitutions, conduced to the perfect keeping of the Primitive Rule, which was that, she designed to be observed in this Monastery. She ordered, and disposed matters with relation to those ends, God had dictated her. First, She imprinted, and settled in these tender plants the spirit, and exercise of prayer, and mortification, which is the particular end, and vocation, the new Rule (or to express it better, that old one, whereof the holy Hermits of mount Carmel made profession) aims at. Having laid this stone, the true support, and solid base of Religion, she soon applied another, no less necessary for conserving this Structure, namely Clauſure; Shutting up the Grates, and Locutories, the very name whereof sufficiently publishes the inconveniences received therein; and the experience of the dangers received hereby,

hath

hath necessitated many Monasteries to a reformation thereto. She forbade entertainments, and conferences from abroad, even with kindred; shutting the gate against all humane consolations, by this means to keep it the more open for divine. She likewise established the way of living on *Alms*, or without Rent; which thing cost her dear, and had been, by our Lord, recommended to her. In fine, she instituted a life of much penance, changing the fine stuff, into coarse serge, shoes into sandals, a soft bed into a hard one of straw; whereto the added poor, and mean fare; so that they feed only on eggs, and herbs, according to the primitive Rule; which it will be pertinent here to set down, before we go further, that it may be better understood, what Rule and Institute the Holy mother chose, and what at this day is kept in her Order, as well among the discalced Carmelite Fryars, as Nuns of the Reformed Rule.

C H A P. 7.

Of the Primitive Rule of the Order of our Lady of Mount Carmel, which is that, the Holy Mother would have to be observed in her Order, and of the great perfection it contains.

For the clearer understanding the Rule, which the B. Mother Teresa de Jesu chose for her Order, it is first to be known, that in the year 1205. Albert Patriarch of Jerusalem, who formerly had been a Religious Hermite of Mount Carmel, gave the Carmelites his Fryars, living then in this holy mountain, a Rule taken from another that had been given to the same Order, by John Patriarch of Jerusalem, as the Histories of the Order recount, and prove more at full: which Rule was confirmed by Innocent the 4th. in the year of Grace, 1248. and the 5th. of his Pontificate: being the Rule that they call the Primitive; which was for some years observed in the Order of our Lady of mount Carmel. But, at length, the Spirit, as well as other things, using in time to flagg, and cease, it seemed so austere, that it was thought impossible to be observed. Therefore the Order requested Eugenius IV. to mitigate it, and afterward desired the like also of other Popes.

Popes. So that of a long time some of the practices that were the most rigorous, were remitted ; and particularly in the Monasteries of Women Religious *perfection* much decayed ; insomuch, that besides general enlarging of the *Rule*, the abuses, and defect of *Clausure* (for, then they did not make profession thereof) they lived also in other great liberty, and ease.

This is the condition, and the *Rule*, whereof the *Holy Mother* made profession, whilst she lived in the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation* ; but, inspired, and animated by our Lord (as we shall relate hereafter) she resolved to follow the *Primitive Rule* of her *Order*, namely that, which had been given by the *Patriarch Albert*, which was afterward confirmed by *Innocent the 4th*. and contains the points following,

The Primitive Rule of the Patriarch Albert.

“ *Albert, by the Grace of God Patriarch of Jerusalem, to his beloved sons Brocard, and the rest of the Religious Hermites, that live under his obedience in Mount Carmel by the fountain of Elias : greeting in our Lord, and benediction in the Holy Spirit.* The holy Fathers have after sundry ways and manners ordained how each one, in what ever Order, or course of Religious life he hath chosen, shoulde live to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, and faithfully serve him with a pure heart, and good conscience. But, because you desire me, that, suitable to your manner of living, I would give you a Rule to be observed for the future ; it is here comprised in the words following.

Of the Election of the Prior, and of the Three Vows.

“ *First, we ordain, that one among you be Prior, who is to be elected to that Office by the common consent of all, or by the greater, and discreet part. Towhom each of you must promise obedience ; and, having promised, endeavour to keep it : as likewise Chastity, and Poverty.*

Of the choice of Places.

“ *You may enjoy places in the Deserts, or where they shall be given you, fit and commodious for the observing your Rule, as the Prior and Religious shall judge most convenient.*

Of

Of the Cells of the Brothers.

"Besides, in the seat where you shall propose to dwell, let every one have his Cell apart, according as the Prior shall appoint by consent of the other Fryers, or the better part of them.

Of the Dieting in common.

"In such sort, that meeting in community, ye eat together in the Refectory what shall be given you in alms, bearing some portion of Scripture read, where this conveniently may be observed. Let none of the Brothers leave his Cell assigned unto him, or change with another, except it be with the leave of him, who is then Prior. Let the Priors Cell be at the entrance into the Covent, that so he may be the first in receiving those that come: and let all things that are to be done, be done by his order, and direction. Let all continue in their Cells, or near them, meditating day, and night in the Law of the Lord, and watching in prayer, if they be not busied in other just imployments.

Of the Canonical Hours.

"Those who can say the Canonical Hours with the Priests, let them say them, according to the Statutes and Rules of the Holy Fathers, and the Custome of the Church. Those who cannot say them, let them for their Matins, say five and twenty Pater-nosters, excepting Sundays and solemn festivals; on which, for Matins, we appoint this number to be doubled, so that they shall say fifty Pater-nosters. Then, for the Lauds, they shall say the same prayer seven times; as also at each of the Hours, they shall repeat it seven times; save at Vespers, when they shall recite it fifteen times.

Of not having Propriety.

"Let none of the Religious call anything his own; but let all you have be in common, and be distributed to every one by the hand of the Prior, or by the Brother to whom he shall commit the office, according as there shall be need; regarding every one's age, and necessities.

Of

Of what may be enjoyed in common.

"Ye may keep some Asses, or Mules, as your necessity shall require; and some Beasts, or Fowles for your maintenance.

Of the Oratory, and Divine Service.

"Let there be in the midst of your Cells an Oratory, as conveniently as may be, where you shall meet every day in the morning to assist at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as opportunity shall be offered.

Of the Chapter, and the Correcting of Faults.

"On all Sundays, or other days, when need is, ye shall treat of the cistodies of the Order, and the profit of Souls: Where also the faults of the Brothers, if any be discovered, shall be punished; observing always the laws of Charity.

Of the Brothers fasts.

"Ye shall fast every day (except Sundays) from the feast of the Exaltation of the holy Cross to Easter-day; unless sickness, weakness, or some other just cause induce you to break the fast; because necessity hath no law.

Of abstinence from Flesh.

"You must abstain from eating flesh, unless it be in case of sickness, or weakness. And, because many times ye must beg in your journey; that ye may not be burdensome to your Benefactors, out of your own houses ye may eat pottage, boiled with flesh: and at Sea ye are permitted to eat flesh.

Exhortations.

"And, seeing that the life of man upon Earth is full of temptation, and those that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution; and that also the Devil your adversary, like a roaring Lion, goes about, seeking whom he may devour; endeavour with all solicitude to put on you the Armour of God, that ye may be able to resist the ambushes of your enemy.

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" Ye must gird about your loyns the girdle of Chasity : Ye must fortifie your
 " hearts with holy thoughts ; for, it is written, The holy thoughts shall
 " keep thee. Ye must put on the breast-plate of Righteousnes, to the end ye
 " may love God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength,
 " and your Neighbour as your self. Above all ye must take the shield of
 " Faith, wherewith ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy;
 " for, without faith it is impossible to please God. Your heads ye must
 " cover with the helmet of Salvation ; to the end ye hope for salvation only
 " from our Saviour, who saves his people from their sins. Let the Sword of
 " the Spirit, which is the Word of God, continue, and abundantly persevere
 " in your mouths, and hearts : and let all, ye do, be done in his Name.
 " Ye must be still doing something, to the end the Devil may find you always
 " busie, and get no entrance into your souls by your being idle. You have for
 " this the instruction, and example of the glorious Apostle S. Paul, by whose
 " mouth Iesus Christ spake ; who set him up a Preacher, and Doctor of
 " the Gentiles in faith and truth, that following his steps, ye might not err.
 " We were among you (saith he) in labour, and travel, working night and day,
 " for fear of being a charge to any one ; not as though we bad not power, and
 " liberty to require necessaries, but to give you an example, to imitate us.
 " For, being with you, we charged you this, That he, who would not work,
 " should not eat. For, we have heard, that there are some among you that
 " live unquietly, and without doing anything : Now such we acquaint, and
 " earnestly beseech in our Lord Iesus Christ, that they eat their own bread
 " labouring in silence. This way is good, and holy, follow it.

Of Silence.

" The Apostle recommends silence to us, when he enjoyns labour should
 " be attended with this vertue : and, as the Prophet witnesseth, Silence is
 " that, that adorns Justice : And in another place; In silence, and in
 " hope shall be your strength. Therefore we decree, that, the office of
 " Compline being ended, ye keep silence till after the end of Prime the next
 " day. And, the rest of the tyme, though the observance hereof be not so
 " rigorous, yet let great care be taken, not to talk much : because as it is
 " written, and experience also teaches, In much speaking, there wanteth
 " not sin. And in another place, He that speaks without considerations,
 " will feel evils. Moreover, He that useth many words, hurteth his
 " own soul ; and our Lord saith in the Gospel, that at the day of Judg-
 " ment men shall give an account of every idle word, they have spoken. Let
 " every one therefore apply a ballance to his words, and a straight rain
 " to.

" to his mouth (lest haply he slip and fall by his tongue, and his fall be irrecoverable unto death) with the Prophet, keeping his ways, " that he offend not in his tongue; and endeavour discreetly, and carefully to observe silence, wherein consists the preservation and advancement " of Righteousness.

An Exhortation to the Prior concerning Humility.

" And you brother Brocard, and he that shall succeed you in the office " of Prior, bear always in mind, and observe in your practice, that which our " Lord saith in the Gospel; namely, That, whosoever would be the " greater among you, shall be your servant; and he that would be the " first, shall be your minister.

An Exhortation to the Brothers to honour their Prior.

" And ye likewise, Brethren, honour your Prior with all humility, " considering rather Jesus Christ in his person than him, whom he hath set " over you, and who saith to the Prelates of the Church, He, that heareth " you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: That so, " ye be not judged guilty of any contempt, but may obtain the reward of life " Eternal, due to Obedience.

" This we have written briefly, appointing you the form of living ac- " cording to which you ought to walk. And, if any one do more, our Lord " at the day of Judgment shall recompence him for it. Yet let him use dis- " cretion, the Rule of Virtues.

And, that the excellency of this Rule may be discerned the better, and what the Order, and the whole Church owes this Saint, having erected the Standard of so holy a Profession, I will observe in brief what is contained therein.

This Rule of Patriarch Albert is of very great perfection, and ex-
treme rigorous, and comprehends Divine, and most high Instruc-
tions, containing in a manner, an abridgment of all that in other Rules
is found of perfection, and austerity. It hath for its scope, and
main end, continual prayer, and meditation; and this is the chief Artist
of all those that we find in the Rule; a thing not seen in any other
Order of the Church. And observe, that this is not by way of counsel,
as S. Francis hath it in his Rule; but it hath the obligation of a Statute,
and

and a Precept. It hath the retirement of other Monasticks and yet stricter ; for, it not only forbids going out of the House, but out of the little Cell too without leave, or some necessity. There is in this Rule more fasting, than is usually practised by most Orders : for, it enjoyns fasting from the Exaltation of the Cross to Easter : And, besides this, a precept of continual abstinence from flesh ; and this, as long as one liveth, without exception, unles in case of sickness ; no small penance ; adding all this to what we have said, and shall hereafter say further ; for, our body being sustained with a solid, and substantial nourishment, as flesh, easily endures all manner of labour, and austerity ; as on the contrary, if low-fed, all other treatments thereof, be they never so exquisite, afford it not any satisfaction. The holy Fathers of the Desert very well understood this, who have reduced all rigour, and austerity to the abstinence, both in quality, and quantity, of meat. Next, What shall I say of the strict poverty, it enjoyns ? This Rule, doubtless, is the first of all at this day, that hath taught living in poverty in particular, and in common, as Pope Gregory IX. and Innocent IV. have declared. I forbear to relate how much it recommends strict Silence, and with what care it enjoyns hand-labour.

So that this Rule agrees with the Monasticks in what concerns Retirement, and Contemplation ; with the Mendicants in poverty ; with the rigid and penitentials, in fasting, in abstinence from flesh, and great solitude in their Cells (which is fitly compared to a perpetual prison) in brief, with the Orders designed to an active life ; it hath likewise a near relation, considering the care it takes of hand labour.

Loe here ! the summary of Alberts Rule, the same which the holy Mother chose, and is observed at present in the new reformation of Carmelites, and Carmeliteesses discalced, with other Constitutions, which have added to the Rule a new rigour. And, with the fervour, which in our days our Lord hath given them, both men and women have forced themselves ; not only to embrace a Rule, which Pope Eugenius IV. faith, could not be kept for its too great austerity, (to use his own expression, that Nature, at present, hath not strength enough to sustain so heavy a load ; and that it is fit to mitigate it, because there will be none found willing to follow so strict a profession) but also with a holy zeal, and a Prudence not Carnal, or Worldly, but Heavenly, and Divine, have augmented these austerties with more, and those very severe, and riged ones.

Tarassone, Lib. 2. Chap. 37.

Constitutions added to the Primitive Rule by the Holy Mother, for governing the Monasteries of her Religious women.

I will here relate some of the chief *Constitutions*, which the *holy Mother* made; for, in regard that she desired exceedingly these should be observed, certainly she would be well pleased, that if other *Originals* should be lost, yet they might still be found in this *Column*; to serve for a bridle to the future Ages, and the confusion of our own, if in our days the practice of any of them come to be abolished, or despised. Those, which here I shall set down, shall be mentioned in the same words, that the *Saint* writ them in; though not in the same *Order*, because I intended only to put down the principal. I have *extracted* these *Constitutions* out of the old ones, printed and observed whilst the *holy Mother* lived.

The *Holy Mothers Rules* touching the Reception of Novices.

"Let care be taken, that such as are to be received in, be persons of
 "prayer, and aspire to all manner of perfection, and contempt of the
 "World; because, if they come in without being disengaged from it, they
 "may take distaste at that which is here observed; and it is better to consider
 "beforehand, than, after admitting them, to be forced to eject them. Let
 "them not be under seventeen years of age; healthy; of good understand-
 "ing, and capable of saying the Office, and of assissing in the Quire. Let
 "them not admit them to make profession, if in the year of their Novici-
 "ate they find not, that they have all the qualities, and every thing re-
 "quisite for whateuer is here to be observed; that, if any one of these be
 "wanting in them, they be in no wise admitted.

"Being satisfied concerning the person, if haply she can bring no por-
 "tion to the House, let her not for this be denied reception; as is observed
 "at this day. Be very careful that the Novices be not admitted out of re-
 "gard to profit: because by little and little covetousnes may steal into your
 "hearts, so that wealth will be respected more than virtue, and the dis-
 "position of the person: let it not be thus; for, it will prove a great mis-
 "chief. Set ever before your eyes the poverty, whereof ye make profession,
 "to leave the good odour thereof to your neighbour in all things; and consi-
 "der, it is not this solicitude that is to nourish you, but Faith, Perfection,
 and

"and Confidence in God alone. Weigh well this constitution, have great regard to it, observe it, as it is fit, and cause it to be read to the Sisters. §. "Before any be admitted to the Habit, let great diligence be used to discover, whether she have the spirit, and health, to go through with this holy discipline; because, after their admission, the remedy is difficult: Nevertheless, though a sufficient diligence hath been used by them in the year of their approbation, let them not be admittit to make their profession, if they have not hopes of them for accomplishing the observance and good of the Order, wherewith we charge the conscience of the Priorels, "and the Mistrels of the Novices, and the other Religious women.

As for the manner, the *Mistress of the Novices* is to take for educating, and instructing them, the *Holy Mother* discourses thereof with the same prudence, which She useth in other matters, speaking thus:

"Let the Mistress of the Novices be furnished with great prudence, and fortified with much prayer; let her have much spirit; and let her have a very special care of reading the constitutions to the Novices, and of teaching them what they are to do, as well in what concerns the ceremonies, as that, which belongs to mortification; and let her look more to the Interior, than the Exterior, making them every day give an account of their proficiency in prayer, and of the manner they use in the mistery they are to meditate on, as likewise of the benefit gained thereby: Let her instruct them also how they are to demean themselves in times of Gifts, and in Aridities; and to break of them their own wills in all things, though they be slight. Let her that hath this office be negligent in nothing, because her work or place, is to bring up souls in which God may settle his dwelling: Let her govern them with tenderness, and love; not wondering at their faults; because she must mortifie every one according as their spirit can bear; let her make more account of having their virtues without defect, than of the rigour of their penances: And let the Priorels command, that one help her in learning them to read. "When the Priorels finds never a Religious woman fit to be Mistrel of the Novices, let her discharge the place her self, and take this task upon her, commanding one of the Sisters to assist her in this office.

All this was dictated by the *Holy Ghost*, whereto the mouth of the *Saint* served as an instrument for declaring them. This, which she enjoys here, about regarding the *Talent* more, than the *dote*, that it might take deeper impression in their hearts, she repeated often in the *Way of perfection*; but more especially in the 31st. Chapter of the

Foundations, where (speaking of the Monastery of Caravacca) she proceeds thus :

The Holy Mother in this *Constitution*, insist mainly upon three things. The first is ; That those that shall be received, be thereto called by God, and be well-dispositioned ; as also, of a good understanding. The second ; That interest be not regarded. The third ; And of no less importance ; That she, who in the year of Approbation, or *Noviceship*, is not found to have the spirit, and a talent fit for the *Order*, in no wise be admitted to make her profession ; in regard that the chief cause of the declining of *Orders* comes hence, that persons are received, whom God calls not to this *Institute* : For, they not only observe not the *Rule* themselves, but likewise hinder others from observing it.

Whence it appears, that the prosperity of *Monasteries* consists in not giving the habit to any, but such, as they doubt not to be called by God ; and, after this admission, in examining strictly during the year of *Noviceship* ; whether some error were not committed in the first Election. This thing requires no other proof, than the long experience of *Orders* ; to which the cruel mercy of some, shrowded under the vail of pity, and charity (which commonly is very usual with women) hath done more harm, and caused more mischief, than a sharp sword would have done in the hands of a fool, or madman : For, this indiscreet pity is not only a deadly infection in the *Order*, and a heavy load on the conscience, but is exceeding great injury done even the party received ; who, seeing himself under the obligation of vows, and of profession, deplores his misery, and complains of a courtie so prejudicial, and a favour so disadvantageous : So that, what he could do before, without blemishing his honour, and losing his soul, he afterward doth at the charge of both (the sweetnes of Religion seeming to him a yoke of Iron, and a burden intollerable) I mean, he leaps over the walls, and quits the boundaries, of his voluntary captivity, breaking all at once with Heaven, and Earth, Angels, and Men, and continuing in the most lamentable condition that can be among Christians. Lo, here, the fruits of the disordered Charity, and the imprudent pity of women which they use toward Novices. For my part, I find no surer sign of a sinking *Order*, and to account its ruine certain, or its relaxation inevitable, than to see it give all those leave to be professed to whom it gives the habit ; when as all are not fit to become members of this Body, or Children of this Mother (for, were it so, the holy Councils would not have allotted a year of approbation).

bation for the learners of this divine Art:) and therefore it is a conjecture, which seems very evident, that, thus an Order chargeth it self with a burden too heavy for it to carry, and that one day the bil lows of a licentious life will sink it to the bottom; in short, that, instead of receiving Children, and Props, that might support it, it receives *Basilisks*, and *Vipers* to destroy it. Whence it is, that the *Founders* of Orders have not watched ore any thing more, than this; and therefore the *Saint* also set it down here, as one, that understood, and throughly perceived its inconveniences.

Of the Religious Womens Habit.

In the Eighth Chapter of the *Constitutions*, speaking of the *Habit* of thy *Religious women*, She hath these words. " Let the *Habit* be of course serge, or course russet-cloth, undied. Let it take up as little stuff as can be fitteth for an habit; and let it have a straight sleeve, no bigger at one end, than at the other. Let it be round without folds, and no longer behind, than before; but let it reach down to the feet. Let the *Scapular* be of the same stuff, four fingers short of the habit. Let the *Cloke for the Quire* be white, but of the same serge, and length, as the *Scapular*: And let always as little stuff be us'd, as may be; regarding only what is necessary, not superfluous: Let them wear their *Scapular* upon a hood of Hemp, or course linnen without any fold. Their inner Garments shall be of Flannel, and sheets of the same. In stead of shooes they must wear sandals; and, for modesty, they may wear drawers of course linnen. The pillows are to be of flannel, unless there be necessity, in which case they may use linnen. Then beds must have no quilts, but only a straw-bed; for, it is found by experience made upon weak and sickly persons, that they do well enough therewith. Let nothing be laid thereon, except when there is need, a *Kush-mat*, or some curtain hung before it of wollen, or course cloth, or some such like thing agreeing with poverty. They must cut their hair, that they do not spend time in combing it. They are never to use Looking-glasse, nor any thing that is curious: but to have a great disesteem of themselves.

Of their Poverty, and Hand labour.

The *Holy Mother* was an extream lover of hand Labour, and poverty; for, She well knew, how much it furthered the increase of the Spirit; and because the one conduceth to the other, I will set down here

here the *Constitutions*, she made touching both these. As to Poverty then, the planting whereof in her Order cost her so dear, She speaks thus:

"They must live of Alms without Rent in the Covents that are in
 "wealthy, and pleasant places; or where they may be provided by peoples
 "charity; and, in places where they cannot subsit, and maintain them-
 "selves meerly upon Alms, they may possess some revenue in common: But,
 "in all things else, let there be no difference between the Monasteries endowed,
 "and those that are not. Let nothing be asked, when it may be forborn, and
 "let there be great need, before ought be asked; but let them relieve them-
 "selves by their hand-labour, as did S. Paul; for our Lord will provide for
 "them what is necessary, supposing, that they desire not superfluities, and are
 "satisfied without delicacies. They shall not want maintenance for support-
 "ing life, if they endeavour with all their might to please our Lord, his
 "Majesty will take care, that their labour shall bring them in profit. Let
 "the Sisters in no wise possess any thing to themselves, and let not this be
 "permitted them, whether in Dier, or in Clothes: Also let them have
 "neither Trunk, nor Chest, nor Wardrobe, (excepting those, who bear
 "office for the Community) and let them likewise have no other things in
 "particular to themselves, but all go in common. This is of great conse-
 "quence, because the Devil may diminish the perfection of poverty in small
 "matters. For this reason the Priorels, when she perceives any Sister ad-
 "dicted to a thing, whether it be a Book, or Cell, is to have a great care,
 "to take it from them; and let this be observed in all the Monasteries,
 "whether they be poor, or endowed, and that with very great rigour; and
 "let the Priorels see it be done, not suffering any opposition thereto: And, in
 "case this custome be violated, let the Provincial very severely punish the
 "Priorels.

Concerning Hand labour, She appoints as follows.

"Let no curious work at all be done, but let their imployment be spin-
 "ning, or some other such, not so fine, as to busie the mind, and hinder the
 "keeping it on God. Let them not work in Gold, or Silver, and let there
 "be no contest about the price of their works, but let them be content with
 "what is fairly offered them; and, if they gain nothing thereby, let them
 "change their work.

"Let the Sisters never be tasked, and let every one strive to work, to
 "relieve the others with Vittuals. Let great account be made of what the
 "Rule enjoyns; that whosoever would eat, must work; and so S. Paul
 "did. Yet, if sometime of their own accord they desire a task of work to
 "difi-

" dispatch every day, let them ; but let no penance be imposed on them, if
" they fail in finishing their days work.

The *Holy Mother* ever insisted very particularly on this *Constitution* concerning Hand-labour, and always, when there was occasion offered thereof, she pressed it with great weight : For, in regard she desired, that her *Monasteries* should be without Rents, and her *Religious* not chargeable to the Inhabitants of the places, where they were founded ; she could find no other expedient, (as indeed there is none better) than to make them get their living by their labour, and by this means likewise prevent the chargeableness of others : But the principal designe was the avoiding *idleness*, and jollity, at which gate enter all sorts of *Vices*. This was the end, *God* had taught her, and she had read in her *Rule*, where working with their hands is strictly commanded, alledging this reason ; namely, *For fear lest the Devil by your being idle, find some means of entring into your souls*. The *Saint* knew well, that idleness is attended with a disgust of *claustre*, and retirement ; that it hath for its fruits, or for its curst effect, gadding about in the *Monasteries*, breaking silence, disturbing others, and losing time as well as prayers : So that one of the reasons for which she feared *Rents* was, because ordinarily revenues carry *satiety* with them ; *satiety* makes persons *idle* ; *Idleness* causeth immoderate *talking*, opens the grate, sends and receives messages, and produces all these other mischiefs, as *Distraction*, *Negligence*, and *Discontent*, which we see in many *Monasteries*.

She also accounted Handy-work a great means of advancing, and perfecting her *Religious* ; Because, by it the body is chastned, retirement in ones Cell is preserved, the Gate shut to vain and wandring thoughts, and the soul kept pure for prayer. Whence we read of the ancient *Fathers of the Desert*, that they measured the spiritual proficiency of the *Religious* by the pains, and diligence, they used in working with their hands ; among whom many laboured not so much for getting *Virtuels*, as for perfecting themselves in *Virtue* ; for, as *Cassian* relates, it was an usual sentence among them, *That the busied Monk was tempted but with one Devil, whereas the idle one was assaulted with many*. *S. Paul the first Hermite*, was not ignorant of this divine secret ; who, unable to sell his work, and make a temporal gain of his labour, reflecting only upon the spiritual benefit laboured continually, filling his grot with panniers, and baskets, which he burnt still at the years end.

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Now the *Saint* not only enjoyed others handy-work, but was her self the first in employing her hands therein: For, though she was so oppressed with sicknesses, except necessary occasions hindred her, she was always busie, either spinning, or sewing, or the like; so that she was never idle a minute. When she went to the *Grate* to speak with very grave persons, she always carried some work along with her to work; whereat they that came to see her were not a little edified, when they discovered it: Whereupon she said; it was a great advantage to speak with the *Grate shut*, because so they might treat of business, and work too. She was such a friend of *hand labour*, that being commanded to write any book, she was much troubled at it, because it hindered her spinning, and employment in other exercises, I mean wemens works, and such as suit best with their use, and inclination; so profoundly humble was she.

Of Communions.

"Let the Sisters communicate on all Sundays, and on all Festivals of our Lord; and those of our Lady; that of S. Albert, of S. Joseph, and the Patron of the Monastery, holy Thurday, the festival of the most holy Sacrament, Ascension-day, and the other days which the Confessor thinks fit; according to the spirit, and devotion of the Religious, with the leave of the Mother Priorels, without which the Sisters may not communicate on other days save those here appointed, though the Confessor bid them.

These are the days allotted by the *H. Mother* for the *Communions* of her *Religious*, where may be seen, and observed the great discretion of the *H. Mother* in allowing *Communions* to her *Religious*: For, though in these beginnings she had souls so pure, and holy, as the often mentions, and we all see by experience, and though on the other side she communicated every day (which seemed a sufficient inducement to give leave to her daughters to repair oftner to this divine source of life) yet, well knowing the purity, and great preparation requisite thereto, she was very cautious, and used great circumspection therein: Desiring that her *Religious* should put their advancement rather in practising more the virtues of *Charity*, *Humility*, *Patience*, and the like, than in frequent *Communions*; for, how much this *Sacrament* is beneficial to him that comes to it piously and religiously disposed, so much it serves for his deeper condemnation, who receives it not well disposed:

sed: And if it were fit any one should frequent it oftener than is the usual custom, the H. mother would have it go be with the advice of the Confessor, and the consent of the Superiress, to the end it might be done with more counsel, and deliberation.

Of the Confessors.

" Let the Prioresses with the Provincial, or Visitor seek out a Priest, whom they are sufficiently satisfied of, touching his age, life, and manners: Who, being such as is fit, may, by advice of the Provincial, be likewise Confessor to the Religious women. Yet, notwithstanding this ordinary Confessor, the Prioresses not only thrice, which the holy Council of Trent allows, but at other times also, may admit some Religious of the discalced Carmelites to confess the Sisters, or others of any Order whatever; being such, as the Prioress is well satisfied concerning their learning, and virtue. She may also do the same for the Sermons; and he who at present is Provincial, or those that succeed him, may not take from them this liberty: Nor that they may not on these Confessors, whether discalced Carmelites, or others, bestow some of the Alms, or present fit of the Chappelry, with relation to their hearing Confessions.

The Holy Mother greatly desired, her Religious should be free for their confessions; which she likewise during her life-time endeavoured, and pressed, and requested with very great earnestness of the then-Superiours, to grant them this holy freedom of seeking out persons learned, and the servants of God, who might help them to advance in Virtue; for, she reckoned, that whilst this took place, they would also maintain themselves in perfection. But, nothing being so good, but it is exposed to many evils, in time, the Holy Mother knew, that what she had enjoyed her Daughters for a remedy, might turn to poison. For, in tract of time the spirit, as well as other things, beginning to decay, she feared the opening a Gate to talk, and entertainments, under colour of spiritual conference. She also weighed other Reasons, and all together made her fear, this Constitution might occasion some looseness in her Monasteries, as she tells a Prioress, who is yet living, and one of the devoutest of her Order. I am (saith she) not well satisfied in this point which I have put in the constitutions; for, though then when this constitution was made, there was a great deal of spirit, and sincerity, yet I fear they will for the future profit nothing thereby, when they are visited, in treating of those melancholies, they may have, which it will be better,

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that they be not known, save to those of the Order. Whereupon the *Superiors* of the same *Order* limited this *constitution* according to the intention of the *H. Mother*, taking from the *Priors* this power, and enjoining the *Provincials* to provide *Religious* for the *Monasteries* according to the *Council of Trent*. And therefore the custome in the time of the *Holy Mother*, and since, is, that the *Superior*, having before advised with the *Priress*, name in the places where they have a *Covent*, besides the ordinary *Confessors*, *three* or *four* grave persons, learned, and of eminent *Virtue*, residing in the same *Town*, to confess them, and assist them in their necessities; in which, it seems, there can be no inconvenience.

But it is of great consequence, that the *Confessors* be persons of sufficient *learning* for knowing, and understanding what is *sin*, and for giving a soul light concerning the *Truth*: As likewise, that they be experienced in *spiritual matters*; because if *experience* be wanting, oftentimes *Learning*, and *Speculation* come short: And, though the learned, without *experience*, may give much light in speculative truths; as, whether there be *sin*, or no, in a matter; whether, in this case, there be ground of *scruple*, or no; in whose advise the conscience of an ignorant person may acquiesce, and securely rest; yet, as to the directing a soul in the means necessary to *perfection*; and as to the instructing it, how to resist a temptation, and teaching it the way of profiting in *prayer* and *mortification*, this belongs more to those who have *experience*, and have travelled themselves by these ways, than those who have extracted their *knowledg* only from *books*; and it is like *Arabick*, or an unknown tongue to them that have not themselves tasted such things. Neither are learning and experience of spiritual matters sufficient, but it is also necessary, that he, who confesses the *Religious women*, know their *Rule*, understand their *Constitutions*, and be one that loves *Prayer*, *Austerity*, and *Penance*; because, wanting this inclination he may easily do them harm, and in one day destroy all that, which the *Holy Mother* planted, and cultivated for many years. But, in case there be not found one with all these qualities; then, as the *Holy Mother* directs, he who is *experienced* should be preferred before one learned without *experience*; for, if he be humble, though perhaps he be ignorant in something, he may ask it of able men; to which inquiry, one of learning will seldom condescend.

Of

Of mental Prayer, and the Canonical Hours.

" Let Matins be said after nine a clock, and not before; nor so long after but that, having ended them, they may stay a quarter of an hour, making the Examen of what they have done that day. This Examen shall have a Bell to ring to it, and she, that is appointed by the Priorels, shall read in the vulgar language something of the Myttery that is to be meditated on the next day. The time bestowed therein must be so measured, that about eleven a-clock, somwhat more or less, a sign with a Bell shall be given for retiring, and reposing. All the time of the Examen, and the reading, they shall tarry all together in the Quire, and let none go forth without leave, after the Office is begun.

" Let them rise at five in Summer, and let them go to their prayers till six: In Winter let them rise at six, and continue in prayer till seven: Prayer ended, let the Hours be said; and, if the Priorels think fit, let them say them all together; or let them leave one or two of them to say before Mass; so, that they be all finished before Mass. On Sundays, and Holy days, Mass, Vespers, and Matins shall be sung. On the first days of Easter, and other high Feasts, Lauds way be sung; especially on glorious S. Joseph's day: Let the singing be not in diversifyed notes, but in one and the same tone, with equal voices: For the ordinary, they shall only read the Service. Let there be constant Mass every day, at which the Sisters shall assist, where it may conveniently be done. Let none be lightly absent from the Quire; and, the Hours being ended, let them go to their busines. Mass shall be said, in Summer, at eight a-clock; at nine, in Winter; and those that receive, shall stay a while in the Quire.

" A little before Dinner, the Bell shall be rung, and all shall meet to make the Examen of that which they have done to that time; and let them consider the greatest fault, they have committed, and purpose to amend it, saying one Pater-noster, that God may give them such grace: Let every one always, where-ever she is, at the time of the Examen, kneel down, and briefly examine her conscience.

" After Grace at Dinner, let them always go to the Quire saying the Psalm Misericordie; and, after Easter, to the Exaltation of the Cross, let them do the same after Supper.

" When it strikes two they shall say Vespers, which being ended, something shall be read, in such sort as that there be not above an hour spent both in Vespers, and in reading, whether it be a solemn Vespers, or not. This is not meant of Lent, when Vespers are said before Dinner; so that then the reading may be from two till three,

" Spending a full hour therein; and, if they find spirit for the making a Lecture of Prayer, let them make one, according as they shall judge convenient more to their recollections, and the profit of their souls.

" Let Compline be said all the year after Supper, or after Collation, that so, the Office being finished, silence may be kept according to the Rule and Constitutions.

In this Constitution she treats of mental, and vocal prayer, on which, as on the main support, are founded all the Monasteries, the holy Mother erected; forasmuch as this is the profession, and especial end of the primitive Rule, the observance whereof the Saint renewed, holding it for the chief Institution; and whereto she directed all her Constitutions for the bringing up persons of Prayer: So that, when any were presented without this cast, she was wont to say, God called them not to her Order; and those that were admitted, and afterward lost prayer, she accounted undone; and as persons at Sea without their Compass, who can neither avoid the storm, nor save themselves from Shipwreck in the spiritual way.

Of the Clauſure, and the Locutory.

" Let none be ever seen without a Veile, unless she be visited by her Father, or mother, or a Sister; and unless there be some reasonable cause, such as hath been mentioned, being for some good end, and that with persons, from whom they find thereby more of edification, than bad example, who help us in our exercises of prayer, and afford us spiritual consolation; but never for Recreation, and Divertissement. There must be also a third person always present, whenever something of conscience is not in agitation. Let the Prioress keep the Key of the Grate, and of the Gate. When the Physician, Surgeon, or other necessary persons, or the Confessor come in, let there be always two attendants: And, when any sick person confesseth, let them retreat to a place, where they may see the Confessor, to whom the sick person only may speak, except some other speak only a word or two, and let one of the attendants go ringing a little Bell, that the Religious may know, there is one from abroad in the House. The Novices likewise may be visited as well as the Professed, that so, if they have any dislike, it may be discovered; for, it is not intended they should stay against their Wills, and if they have a desire to be gone, let opportunity be given them to declare their intentions, and minds tberein.

" Let them not meddle in Secular affairs, nor discourse of them at all, except

" except thereby they may afford some good remedy to those whom they speak
 " with, and reduce them to the way of Truth; as likewise to comfort
 " them in any trouble: and, if they designe not the extracting some benefit
 " therefrom, let them presently break off from such matters: For, it is of
 " consequence, that he who visits us profit by our conversation, and do not re-
 " turn with loss of his time, we also reaping no other fruit thereby. Let
 " the Assistant be careful, that this point be observed, and let her be bound
 " to certifie the Priorels, if she see any failure: Which if she do not, let
 " her suffer the same punishment; which she should, that infringeth this
 " custome; but this after two admonitions. The Assistant shall be nine days
 " shut up in her Cell, and every third day of the nine, shall receive a dici-
 " pline in the Refectory; this being a thing that greatly concerns the
 " Order.

" Let them, as much as they can, avoid discourse with their kindred;
 " for, besides that by this means they come much to espouse their interests,
 " and their hearts are enslaved to vain affections, it will be difficult, in these
 " converses, not to talk of secular matters. Let there be great caution of
 " speaking to persons from abroad, though they be very near kindred, unless
 " they be such, as delight to discourse of spiritual matters; for otherwise let
 " them seldom see them, and let them quickly dismiss these troublesome,
 " and uselesse visits.

In this Constitution is very observable the great caution, the Saint enjoys her Religious concerning speech; determining the persons with whom, and the things, about which they should treat. For, if the subject be not spiritual, or directed to this end, the Constitution permits not to talk of it: And, for taking off the Veile, she would have it done seldom, and with very great circumspection.

*Of other things which the H. Mother appointed in
 her Constitutions.*

Lo here the main Constitutions, omitting divers others of great perfection, and full of spirit.

When the Holy Mother founded the first Covent of S. Joseph of Avila, she took for a model, and form, of living both for her self, and their Monastery, the first Rule of our Lady of mount Carmel, to which she added some other observances, concerning Clothes, Diet, the Quire, and all other matters of Religion, short indeed, yet substantial, and important. These Constitutions were approved by the Bishop of Avila.

to whom the Monastery was then subject: And not only the first Monastery observes them; but, after its example, the rest also which she founded; though the Mother did not put her last hand to her Foundations.

Now in the Year 1580. by the favour and protection of King Philip the second, the discolsed Fathers, being discharged from obedience to the Fathers relaxed, held their Provincial Chapter at Aleala de Senarez, where presidie as Legate Apostolical the Father John de las Cuevas of the Order of S. Dominic, afterward Bishop of Avila; and with authority Apostolick the Fathers in Chapter assembled made Confittions for their Order, and by the same power approved those, which the Holy Mother made for her Religious women. They were also confirmed afterward by Pope Sixtus Quintus, who said, that he approved the Confittions made by the hand of this holy Virgin. Afterward they were honoured and confirmed by all the General Chapters, and by the Successors of Sixtus Quintus.

If we consider them all accurately, we shall find, that the Saint aimed principally, in these divine Rules, at the establishing four things in her Order. The first, which is as the end, and scope of all the rest, is mental Prayer, the language of the Spirit, or communication with God. The second is Clauſure, as a thing so necessary, and important to Prayer: And I mean by Clauſure not only the retirement of Monasteries, but even that of their Cells; as in the Rule is enjoyned. For this reaſon ſo ſtrictly commanded avoiding diſcourses, and conuerſing with ſecular persons. The third is Penance, and Austerities; as is ſeen in the Feſts of the Rule, and in the Mortifications, whicht ſhe added thereto, concerning Diet, Lodging, Apparel, Disciplines, and other ri-gorous, that are in the Confittions, which are very great for delicate young women. The fourth is Poverty, and Hand labour, which we have ſpoken of above.

Besides this, ſhe ſet up an Institute exceeding full of Charity, and Humility; for, as to Humility, ſhe manifested it in her abolishing all titles of honour used in other Monasteries, and would have her Religious, if Inferioris, ſtiled your charity; if Superioris, your Reverence. She made all equal in the diſtribution of the common Offices, and mean employmets of the Monastery, as ſweeping, ſcouring things, and the like, commanding they ſhould begin at the Prioress.

She endeavoured also that great charity and humility ſhould be between her Daughters; and for this cauſe ſhe appointed them to be few in each Monastery, and in their necessities to be carefully affiſted:

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And, for the better preserving this, she desired that her *Religious*, after *Dinner*, or *Supper*, might talk all together among themselves what they best liked; provided, that the discourse be pious, and sue with their profession; but very strictly forbade, that any *Religious women* should speak with another at other times, except by special leave of the *Superioress*; and that, only about some *spiritual* matters directed to the benefit, and comfort of some one; and therefore she accounted *abominable*, as *death*, *particular amities* among persons *Religious*; but she would have all in general love each other, as *Jesus Christ* commands his *Apostles*; and she much more forbids other *Fondnesses*, *Looks*, *Gestures*, and *Caresses* of *women*, though they may be permitted; such as mutual *embraces*, taking one another by the *hand*, *kissing*, all which are to be avoided by persons that live spiritually, and treat of matters interior.

She much recommends the being *disengaged*, not only from one another, but also from *kindred*, and all things else that relish of *flesh* and *blood*: And that the *Religious* might not fall into the great mischief of making themselves tributaries to any persons devoted to them by giving them *presents*, and expecting again from them some temporal commodities; as also, to the end they might not depend on their *kindred*, or others from abroad, and might not thus be obliged to entertain them, and loiter at the *Locutory*, when they come to visit them, she made a *Constitution*, by which the *Prioreses* are bound to give all their *Religious* what is necessary, for *clothes*, and *diet*, both in health, and sickness: Which at this day is observed in her *Monasteries* with the same exactness, and the same love, as a *mother* of a family would provide for her *childrens* wants. She also ordered that there should be no *confusions*, nor any *sweetmeats* with sugar made in any of her *Convents*; that, being farther from the *occasions*, they might be so likewise from the *sin*.

Tarasson, Lib. 2. Chap. 14.

Of the *Hermitages* of this *Order*; and the particular *Constitutions*.

Besides the other *Covents* of the *discalced Carmelites*, there are in every Province *Hermitages*, in which is made profession of the solitary and *hermetical* life, in as much rigour, and perfection of living, as in the times of those great men *Macarius*, *Antony*, *Hilairos*, and the other.

Other ancient Monks of Egypt, and Palestine. And we see in our days the Heremitical discipline restored into its Original, which above a thousand years since was by the cruelties of Abumar, and other Tyrants, extinguished in the East; now, I say, we see it established in its primitive lustre by means of this holy Virgin, and this Order in possession of its ancient inheritance, and the birth-right of its predecessors.

I could (if time permitted me) make here a long discourse of the perfection of these solitary houses, both in relation to prayer, and to austerity of life; but I will content my self only to relate the main Constitutions of this profession, whereby may be seen the accomplishment of the great things, which our Lord promised the holy Mother. The first is continual prayer day and night without interruption, as much as humane frailty permits; for, there is here no other employment, save the perpetual attending on Contemplation, or on spiritual Reading as a means to this Exercise. And, because silence is a faithful companion of prayer, it obligeth them at all times, and places, without exception; and this such, that any person having need to ask for any thing, it must be done by signes, or writing; for, in this Sanctuary, to speak one word only, is a fault as hainous, as very important matters in other places. There is no speaking, but on the days appointed for spiritual conferences, which are only once every fifteen days, and some other days extraordinary, as namely Easter, and the Feasts of the first Class: At which times all their discourse is of God, and ordered to their advantage: For, the Superior proposeth a point of prayer, and the exercise of some vertue, of some mean way to mortifie the passions, to resist temptations, or the like; and every one in his Order declares his thought, and meditation, touching the subject; and the Superior ends the conference, extracting a Doctrine, and instruction in common for all.

Solitude and retirement accompanies the prayer and silence of this place; for, ordinarily, the repose of contemplation is not gotten, but by abandoning, and retiring from Creatures: So that they have a Constitution, that those who live in these Deserts, may not go out of the Monastery for any cause whatsoever; from which rule even the Prior is not excepted. A secular person may not come into these houses, nor the other Religious of the same Order, without license from Father General; and with such license any secular person may be permitted to come in, so that he do not stay all night, lest thereby he molest, or divert the Prior, or the Hermites. For women, there is an excommunication against such as come within the limits of the Desert, and against the Super-

Superior, and all the *Religious* consenting thereto. There is no writing, or receiving any *Letter*: this being permitted to none but the *Superior*. And, what is more commendable, it is forbidden the *Religious* who go from other *Covens* to carry thither any news of things abroad; so that there enters not here one word concerning the World, or not relating some way to the place. Which things are ordered by a prudence Celestial, to the end that Souls so pure might not be hindred by the Representations, and Images of Creatures; and that, where is no affection already to earthly things, there not only the *sight* thereof, but even the *Remembrance* may be totally abolished.

The *Penance* and austerity of Life practised in these *Deserts* seemes to be above Humane power: and, were it not by a particular assistance of the Divine mercy, which concurs with more grace, where is a greater Obligation, and Perfection of state, it would be impossible to endure it. *Diet*, *Bed*, and the other vienfles serving to humane Life, are reduced to the utmost necessities, without which Nature cannot subsist. Their *poverty* is very great, they eat what is sent them of alms, and none goes abroad to ask any thing: For, such is the Constitution of the Desert. So that these four things, I have mentioned, to wit continual *Prayer*, perpetual *Silence*, constant *Solitude*, and this great *Penance*, I was speaking of, are the *Pillars* of this Fabrick, and the main, and Fundamental constitutions of the *Heresymal Life*.

The *Religious* are divided into two bodies; one lives in *Community*, saying the *Divine Office* in the *Church*, and eating together in the *Refectory*: the other lives Day and Night in the *Hermitages* apart; and, when the *Bell* ring, in the *Covent* to the *Canonical Hours*, and to *Prayer*, these do the same in their little Solitude, and all at the same time say the *Office*, though they be at under, and perform many ether common acts; the one and the other observing with great rigor the *Constitutions* I named. All are governed by a *Superior*, and measure all their actions by the rule of *Obedience*. Those that live in the *Hermitages* come every *Sunday* to the *Chapter*, and, when the *Superior* thinks fit, he makes them return with the rest to the *Covent*, and sends others to their place, that so by such change, and variety, their Life may be sweetened, and their benefit also increased: Every month they give the *Superior* an account of their spirit of their *Prayer*, and proficiency wherein with great Fidelity, Truth, Confidence, and *Obedience*, they discover all the turnings and windings of their Souls to him that is in the place of *Jesus Christ*, who, by this means understands, and exactly weighs the greatest part of their Improvement.

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Were I to describe particularly the Heavenly Orders which are observed in these *Deserts*, the perfection, and Sanctity of Life that flourishes in these Sacred *Houses*, I must make a Volume. That, which I have related, may suffice for understanding the Sanctity of the *B. Mother Teresa*, who was the divine Instrument, God made use of for Establishing this high *Institute*, and who always kept up this solitary Spirit. As also the first motives she had for settling her first *Monastery*, were, that she and her Companions with Sails displayd might to betake themselves to *Prayer*, *Silence*, *Retirement*, and *Mortification*; which things she enjoyed all the time that she lived in the *Monastery* of the glorious *Saint Joseph*, that is, for the space of five Years. These were the first designs the Holy *Mother* had, as we said: and our *Lord*, the more to honour his Servant, and satisfie her Holy purposes, appointed that there should be in her *Order* this profession so high, and so suitable with her first motives, and desires of beginning this new Reformation.

But, before the executing of these Divine cogitations, his *Divine Majesty* perfected them, making them more universal, and secondeing them with an ardent Zeal of Charity towards Souls Infected with Heresy in *France*, and other parts. Hereunto she directed the whole Spiritual and Divine Fabrick of her *Monastery*. This was then the scope of her desires, of her *Prayer*, and *Penance*, as also of her Companions. For, the meerly considering the Souls lost in *France*, the *Churches* there ruined, and profaned, was worse than death to her; and she would willingly have spent a thousand Lives to save these Souls from Destruction. But our *Lord*, who kindled in his Servants heart these desires, and such Zeal, furnished her also in a great part with the Remedies; and was pleased, that the *Saint* should see from Heaven the Fruit of her Prayers in the *Realm of France*, where in a short space were Erected four *Monasteries* of *Religious Women* of her *Order*. But it is a thing deserving admiration, to see the good, these *Religious Persons* do upon such Souls, and the great Changes every day discerned by means of their example, and their *Prayer*.

The *Saint* hath likewise seen from Heaven her Desires accomplished in what concerns the furthering the Conversion of the Souls of all *Infidels*, (for which ends God drew her from the strict Clasure of the *Monastery* of *S. Joseph at Avila*) since at this day the like Zeal of the *Mother* is found Engraven on the Heart of the Children, but especially in the *Congregation* of the *Discalced Carmelites of Italy*: who, with a great zeal, and fervent Spirit following the Holy Intentions of their *Mother*, or, more properly, the Steps of the *Apostles*, dedicate themselves to the Conversion

sion of the World, and this holy Family Educates all her Children with this fervour, and Motherly zeal. In which they by their Works sufficiently shew the thirst they have of the Salvation of Souls; Since, being few in number, they have already sent their *Religious* into *Perſia*, with *Breves* of our Holy Father *Clement the eighth* very favourable. They have also already obtained a *Covent* in *Cracovia* in the *Realme of Poland*, and they are now preparing to go and Found in *France*, directing all to the Freeing Souls from Errors, and Blindness. Those that are designed to go to the *Missions* are prepared in the *Seminaries* in *Italy*, where their principal Exercise is *Prayer*, and *Study*, which are the chief *Arms* for these Conquests: They carefully study the *Tongues*, and labour by a thousand ways to make themselves fit Instruments for aiding the *Church*, and Saving *Souls*.

CHAP. VI.

The Foundation of the Monastery of Medina del Campo.

I Lived five Years in the *Monastery of S. Joseph of Avila*, after it was Erected; which, as far as now appears to me; I account the quietest time of my whole *Life*, the want of which Repose, and Tranquillity, my Soul often feels. In this time entered several *Damocells* to become *Religious*, being very *Yong*, whom, in all appearance, the *World* reckoned fure her own, as their *Gallantry*, *Pomp*, and *curious Dress* discovered: from which Vanities our *Lord* soon freed them, and brought them home to himself, Endowing them with such high *perfection*, as was a great confusion to me: their *number* amounted to *Thirteen*, which it was decreed, should not be exceeded. It took extream delight to converse amongst so *Holy*, and *pure Souls*; seeing that all their care was only to serve, and praise our *Lord*, His *Divine Majesty* sent us there what was necessary without asking; and, if at any time we were in want (which was very seldom) their Joy was so much greater. I praised our *Lord* to see such *Heroical* virtues; and in particular, how *careless* they lived of every thing that concerned the necessities of the *Body*. I who was *Superioris* there, remember not, that ever I had any care about this; because I believed

lieved for certain, our *Lord* would not be wanting to them, who were not solitious for any thing, but how to please *him*. And, if sometime; I had not Provision enough for all, upon my saying, that those who *most needed* were to be *Relieved* therewith, each one accounted her self not to be *such*; and so it remained *untouched*, till *God* sent sufficient for all.

Astouching the virtue of *Obedience* (whereto I am exceedingly devoted, though I knew not well how to practise it, till these Servants of *God* so taught me it, as I should never forget it, had I any goodness) I could say many things, which I here saw in them. One at present off'rs it self to me, and it is this: Being one day in the *Refectory*, there were set before us some portions of *Cucumbers*, whereof one very *little*, and rotten within, fell to my share: I, dissembling the matter for triall of her *Obedience*, called a *Sister*, one of the best Understanding, and Parts amongst them; and bad her, go and set this *Cucumber* in a little *Garden*, we had; she asked me, whether she shold put it into the ground *down-ways*, or *side-ways*: *side-ways*, said I: she went instantly, and put it into the ground, laying it in that manner, without ever reflecting, that it was impossible, but it must perish: the doing it out of *Obedience* so captivated her *natural reason* in the Service of *Christ*, as to believe, it was very well done. It fell out once, that I imposed *six*, or *seven* contrary Offices upon one, which she, without saying a word, undertook, as thinking it possible for her to perform them all. We had a *Well* (by report, of those who had tried it) of very *bad Water*, which I would have had conveyed in a *Pipe* to our *House*, thinking that, if once it did run, it might serve us to *Drink*; but, the *Well* being very low, it seem'd impossible to find a way to make it current: I caused *Workmen* to be fetched that were skilful herein, to see if they could do ought; they laughed at me, that I should go about to be at charge to no purpose. I asked the *Sisters*, what they thought of it: One answered, *It shold be attempted*: Another said, *Since our Lord is pleased to procure us Victuals, will he not provide one to bring us Water?* Now it will be less charge to his *Majestie* to give it us here in the *House*; and therefore he will not fail to do it. I, considering her great *Faith*, and with what resolutenes she spake it, believed it for certain, and, contrary to the mind of a skilful *Plummer*, (that not only knew, the *Water* was very bad, but said besides, there could be so little drawn from thence, as was not considerable) caused it to be done, and it pleased our *Lord*, that it succeeded so well, that we got a little *Current of Water*, enough for us, and very *good to drink*, as is there to be seen. I reckon not this for a *Miracle*, for I could mention other things, but to shew,

shew the strong *Faith*, these *Sisters* had ; for, the thing happened just as I have related. And, because my principal intent is not to commend the *Nuns* of this *House* (who all, through *God's grace*, to this day proceed in the same manner) and to write of these, and many other such matters, would be too long (though not unprofitable, since sometimes those that come after, are thereby encouraged to imitate them;) I pass by the like instances : but if it please our *Lord*, to cause them to be published, their *Superiors* may enjoyn the *Prioresse* to write them.

I lived then amongst these *Angelic Souls*; for, such they appeared to me ; since they concealed from me no Imperfection whatever, were they never so Internal. But, who can express their disengagement from all Earthly things, their ardent Longings to serve his *Divine Majesty*, and the favours, our *Lord* hath done them ? Doubtless they were exceeding great ; Solitude was their Recration, so that they have assured me, that they were never satisfied with being alone and retired ; that they took it for a huge Torment to be visited by any from abroad, though they were their own Brothers. She, that had the most time to stay in one of the little *Hermitages*, which we have made in our Garden, esteemed her self the most happy. Whilst I was thus reflecting upon the great value of these Souls, and the Courage *God* gave them to suffer, and to serve him, certainly beyond that of Women ; I thought many times, that these Rich Graces which our *Lord* had laid up in them were for some singular end : Not that, what afterward happened, came into my mind ; for it seemed then impossible, there not appearing the least ground for me to imagine it ; although my desires, as time run further on, so still more increased, whereby I longed to be able to do something for the *good* of any Soul : and methoughts it was with me, as of one, that had a vast Treasure in his keeping, and desired that all should share therein, had his hands tied, that he could not Distribute it ; so my Soul seemed as it were bound up ; for the Favours *God* did these in those Years were very admirable, and I reckoned them all ill bestowed upon me. I strove to serve our *Lord* with my poor Prayers, and continually Laboured with the *Sisters*, that they would do the same, and zealously endeavour the *good* of Souls, and increase of the *H. Church* : whence it came to pass, that whosoever Conferred with them, was exceedingly Edified : and herein I rested, allayed, and satiated my Impetuous desires.

After four Years, or somewhat more, there happened to come to see me, a Religious Person of *S. Francis's Order*, called *Fr. Alfonso Maldonato*, a great Servant of *God*, having the same Desires for the *good* of Souls, that I ; but he was able to put them in Execution, which in I en-

vyed him extreamly : This Father came a litle before from the Indies, and began to tell me, that divers Millions of Souls were lost in those Countries for want of Instruction ; and he made us a good Sermon upon this subject, encouraging us to Penance, and so departed. I continued so afflicted at the los of so many Souls, that I was besides my self : thereupon I went to one of our *Hermitages*, and shedding abundance of Tears from my eyes, I cried to our *Lord*; beseeching him, that he would find out some means, whereby I might gaine some Souls to his Service, seeing the Devil drew away such a multitude ; and that my Prayers might prevale something for it, since I was good for nothing else. I enuyed them exceedingly, who for the Love of *God* could herein spend themselves so freely, though they under-went the extreamest Difficulties, and suffered a thousand Deaths. Whence it befalls me, that when we read in the *Saints Lives*, that they Converted Souls, it breeds in me more Devotion, more Tendernes, and Emulation, than all the Martyrdomes that they suffered, in regard this is an Inclination which our *Lord* hath given to me : conceiving that he values more one Soul, which, through his mercy, we gaine to him by our *Prayers*, than all the other Services, we can do him. Being in *Prayer* one Evening in this so extream Heaviness, our *Lord* appeared to me, as he used to do, and expressing much Affection, as willing to Comfort me, said to me : *Wait a while Daughter, and thou shalt see great matters.* Which words were so Imprinted upon my Heart, that I could not put them out of my thoughts ; and though I could not conjecture, with much musing thereon, what the matter should be, yet I was nevertheless exceedingly comforted, and well assured, that in the sequelle they should be verified ; but how, and by what means, never came into my head. Thus (to my Remembrance) another half Year ran out ; after which, hapned that, which I am now about to relate.

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CHAP. VII.

*How our Father General came to Avila, and
that which followed upon his coming.*

Ordinarily our *Generals* do reside at *Rome*, and never (that is known) came any one into *Spain*; so that it seemed a thing impossible that he should come hither; but since there is nothing impossible which our *Lord* will have effected, his Divine Providence was pleased to bring to pass now, what had never been done heretofore. As soon as I understood that he was come to *Avila*, me thought I was troubled, because, as I have said already in the Foundation of *S. Joseph* of *Avila*, this *Monastery* was not subjected to the *Order*, for the reason there mentioned: Whereupon I feared two things; One, that he would be displeased with me; for, not knowing how matters went, he had cause: The other was, that he would Command me to return to the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation*, in which the *Rule* is mitigated; which for many reasons (not necessary to be now related) would have proved a very great affliction to me. This one is enough, that I could not there observe the *Primitive Rule* in its rigour; and that the number of the *Religious Women* there was above a hundred and fifty; for where there are but few, there is more Conformity and quiet. But our *Lord* disposed hereof better than I imagined; for the *Father General* was so great a Servant of his, and so Discreet, and Learned, that he accounted this *New Foundation* a good work, and for the rest, discovered not to me the least dislike: He is called *Father John Baptist Rossi* of *Revenna*, a Person very Eminent in the ORDER, and, deservedly, much-esteemed. I procured him therefore to come to *S. Joseph's*; and the *Bishop* liked well, that the same Entertainment in all points should be given to him, as to himself in Person. I gave him an account of the Foundation, and in a manner of my whole Life with all Truth, and Simplicity; for my manner is to treat in this wise with my Superiors, come what can come thereof, seeing they stand in the Place of *God*: and the same I do to my *Confessors*; which if I did not, my Soul methinks did not go secure. And so, as I was saying, I gave him an account of the Foundation, and in a sort of my whole Life; though it were very bad: He Comforted me much, and assured me, that he would not command me to remove hence. He was exceeding glad to see our way of Living, and a lively (though imperfect)

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Image of the first Original of our Order; and how the Primitive Rule was observed with all rigour; a thing, done in no other Monastery of the whole Order. Out of the great desire he had that this small beginning should go forward, he gave me very ample and authentick Letters Patents, for Erecting more Monasteries, with Injunctions to the Provincials, that none of them should hinder me therein. These I asked not of him, but he freely granted them to me, as knowing my manner of proceeding and drift in my Prayers, which was an extream desire of being an Instrument, that some Souls might approach nearer to God, and be by love united to him. But, these means of it, I procured not from him; nay rather they seemed a kind of folly to me: for I well enough knew, a woman so contemptible, and having so little Authority, as I, could do nothing: (but yet, when these desires leize upon the Soul, it is not in her Power to repell them;) excepting that, by reason of the passionate Longing to please God, and the Fa.th, such a Soul hath in him, his Majesty makes possible that, which to natural Reason is not so. Whereupon, in seeing the exceeding forwardnes of our most Reverend F. General for my Founding more Monasteries, methought I saw them already finished: and calling to mind the words, which our Lord had spoken to me in Prayer, I now discovered some beginning of that, which before I could not understand. I extreamly resented our F. General his return to ROME, conceiving my self very desolate, and lonely: I had begun to bear a great Affection to him, and he on the other side expressed extraordinary Love to me, doing me many Favours. As oft as he could spare time, he came to the Monastery to treat with the Nuns about Spiritual matters, as one on whom our Lord had certaintly conferred eminent Graces: in which respect it was a pleasure to us to hear him.

Before his going away, the Lord Bishop Don Alvarez da Mendoza, a great Friend, and Patron of such, as he feeth aime at serving God in higher perfection, procured the leaving him a Licence, to Erect in his Diocese, some Covens of Discalced Friars of the first Rule; which thing some others also had requested of him. Father General was willing to grant it; but, finding some opposition in the Order, left it might disquiet the Province, forbore for that time. Some days passed, when considering how necessary it was, if I Erected Monasteries of Religious women, that there should be some of Men, that observed the same Rule, though I saw so very few such persons as yet in this Province, that methought they were extreamly wanted, yet, earnestly recomending the businesse to our Lord, I writ a Letter to our F. General, wherein I intreated him after the best manner I could concerning it, alledging certain reasons, from which

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was evidently shewn the eminent Service, that would thereby be done to *Almighty God*: and that the Inconveniences, that might arise, were not sufficient to hinder so good a Work: I likewise set before him the *Honour*, that hereby would accrue to the *B. Virgin our Lady*; to whom he was exceedingly devoted. She it was questionless, who effected the business; for, this Letter comming to the hands of *F. General*, being at *Valencia*, he sent me thence a *Licence for Founding two Covents*, as one who greatly desired the promoting, and further advancing of *Religious Discipline* in the *Order*. And, lest there might be Contradiction in it, remitted this matter to the present, and the preceding *Provincial*; a thing very difficult to obtain: but, as soon as I saw the principal thus effected, I had great hopes, our *Lord* would compleat the rest: and so it fell out; for by the *Lord Bishop's* means, who followed the business close, as though it had been his own, both the *Provincials* gave their consents.

Being now encouraged by this *Licence* procured, my care also increased, from the not having any one of our *Friars* in all the *Province* (so far as I knew or had heard) fit for our turne, to put it in Execution, nor any Secular Person willing to begin it: hereupon I did nothing but beseech our *Lord*, if it were his pleasure, that he would raise up *One* at least to begin the Work. *House* I had none, nor Means to get one. Lo here! a poor *Discalced Nun* without the assistance of any person, except our *Lord*, furnished with *Letters*, and good *desires* only, without any possibility of accomplishing them; my Courage indeed failed not, nor my Confidence, that our *Lord* having granted *one* thing, would likewise bestow the *other*: Upon this, I conceived, all was now possible, and so began to set about it. O *Greatness of Almighty God!* How do you shew your *Power* in giving *Courage* to such an *Ant*! and how, O my *Lord*, are you not wanting to do great things by, and confer great Favours on, those that love you! but we by our own *Cowardise* and *Pusillanimity* are wanting, because never throughly resolved, but full of a thousand fears, and *Humane Prudences*! Whence it comes to pass, that you my *God*, display not your Greatneses, and Wonders. Who is readier to give, were there any to receive? And to accept of our Services at his own charge, than you? May it please your *Divine Majesty*, that I may have done you any Service herein, and have not rather a greater account to render for the very much, I have received.

CHAP. VIII.

By what means the Founding the Monastery of S. Joseph at Medina del Campo began to be treated of.

B eing then busied in these thoughts, and cares, it came into my mind, that it would do well to strengthen my self with the Authority of the *Fathers of the Society of Jesus*. These in *Medina* were very well beloved, and esteemed of, with whom also (as I have already mentioned in the *Foundation of the Monastery of Avila*) I have for many Years communicated the Affairs of my Soul; and, for the great good they have done it, do bear them a particular affection, and reverence. So, I writ that, which our *Father-General* had commanded me, to the *F. Rector* of this place, which happened to be *E. Baltasar Alvarez*; who, as I said, was my *Confessor* many years before, and at this present is *Provincial*. He, and all the rest said, they would do what they could in this affair; and, in effect they did very much in procuring a *Licence* from the *Deputies of the People*, and from the *Prelate*; For the *Monastery* being to be settled in *Poverty*, this in all places, and Countries, is found a difficult task, and so there was some time spent in negotiating the business. For this purpose went thither a *Priest*, a great Servant of *God*, and much disengaged from the things of the *World*, and also of much *Prayer*; he was *Chaplain* to the *Monastery*, where I lived, and our *Lord* had given him the same de- fises, as me; whereupon he assisted me much, as hereafter may be seen: his name was *Julian d' Avila*.

Now, though I had a *Licence*, yet had I no *House*, no, nor one *Farthing* to purchase one; and, *Credit* to borrow, or give Security (had not our *Lord* supplied me) how could a poor Stranger, as I was, ever procure? But our *Lord* furnished us after this sort. A very virtuous *DAMSEL*, [*Isabella de Jesu*] for whom there was no room left to be admitted into *S. Joseph's at Avila*, hearing, that another *Monastery* was to be Erected, came to seek me, desiring that I would receive her into it. She had some Money, but very little, not enough to *buy*, but only *hire* a *House*; and to help to bear the Charges of the Journey; So we Hired one: and without any other supply, save this, we went from *Avila*, [*Maria a S. Jo. Baptista*,

Baista, her Kins-woman ; and Anna ab Angelis [Aug. 13.] two Nuns of S. Joseph, and my self, with four [Agnes de Tapia] afterward a Jesu;) Anna de Tapia (afterward *de Incarnatione*; Her Cousin Germans: Isabella Arias (afterward a Cruce;) Teresa *Quesadis*, of the Monastery of the *Incarnation* (in which the Rule is mitigated where I lived before S. Josephs was Founded) and with us our Father Chaplain Julian d'Avila.

As soon as it was known in the City, there arose a great murmuring: some said, I was a *Fool*; others, that the event of this Extravagency was to be expected. The *Bishop* (as himself afterward told me) thought it a very silly Undertaking, though he did not then say so; yet wold not hinder me, because loving me exceeding tenderly, he would not too much grieve me: my Friends also spoke enough to me of it, but I made very little account thereof; for I judged that so easie, which they held to be difficult, and doubtful, that I could not be perswaded, but it would succeed well.

Now, before I left Avila, I had written to a Religious Person of our Order, called F. Antonio de Heredia, to buy me a Houle, who was at that time Prior of a Covent of Religious Persons there of our Order, called St. Anne's. He treated thereof with a certain Gentlewoman that respected him much, who had one very well seated, but quite decayed, all save one Appartement. This Gentlewoman was so kind that she promised to sell it him, and so the bargain was made without demanding Security of him, or requiring any thing, save his bare word: a happy accident this; for, had she insisted thereon, there had been nothing done: but our Lord it was, who thus went disposing all. The Walls of this House were so gone to Ruine, that we hired another, whilst it was Reparing, there being much to be done to it, to make it fit. So, coming the first days journey late at night to Arevalo, weary with the ill Accommodation we had upon our way, at our entrance into it there met us a Priest [Alphonsus Stephanus] our Friend, who had provided us a Lodging in a House belonging to certain devout Woman, and told me in private, we were destitute of a House [at Medina]; for that, hired for us, joyned to a Covent of the Augustinian Fathers, who made great opposition against our entry, unwilling that a place so near to them should be made a Monastery, and therefore that we must go to Law about it. O my God! when you, our Lord, are pleased to give courage, how little signifies all resistance! For this seemed rather to have animated me the more, as taking the Devil's beginning to Embroile matters for a Signe, that our Lord would be served in this Monastery. Notwithstanding, I desired him to say nothing, lest it might disquiet

my *Companions*; especially those two of the *Incarnation*: (for, the rest, I knew well enough, would for my sake have endured any trouble;) one of which was then *Sub-Priore*s of the *Monastery*, both of them of very good Families, and kindred; who, (because they came with me much against their minds) exceedingly opposed their going forth thence; for all judged it to be a mere Extravagancy: and I afterward saw, they had reason enough. For, when our *Lord* is pleased, that I shall Found one of these *Monasteries*, methinks, my Spirit is not capable of admitting any thing so considerable, as to make me desire from the Execution thereof, till the thing be done: but then it seems quite otherwise; when all the difficulties are represented to me all at once, and imprinted in my mind, as by the sequele shall appear.

When we were come to our *Lodging*, I understood, that, in this place was then a *Religious man* of *S. Dominic's Order*, a very great Servant of *God*, and my *Confessor*, whilst I lived at *S. Josephs of Avila*; of whom (having in that *Foundation* spoken much of his virtue) I shall mention nothing here, but his Name; which is *Fr. Dominicus Bannez*, a person of eminent Learning, and great Prudence, by whose Judgment I steered my *Actions*: neither did this I now undertook, seem to him a thing so difficult, as it did to others; for, the greater any ones knowledge of *God* is, the easier do his Works seem to him. He, upon the understanding certain Favours, *God* had done me, and with himself, had seen in that *Foundation* of *S. Joseph at Avila*, concluded, that all was possible. It comforted me exceedingly to see him; by whose advice I believed every thing would succeed well. As soon as he came I told him very privately, what had passed. His opinion was, the busyness betwixt us and the *Augustine-Fathers*, might be soon settled, and dispatched; but to me all delay was very tedious, because I knew not how to dispose of so many *Religious women*; so we all passed that night with trouble, for the thing was quickly known to all the House.

In the morning betimes there came hither *Fr. Antonio de Heredia* of our *Order*, and said, that the *House*, which he had agreed about, the purchasing of, was sufficient, and that it had a *Portico*, or Hall, where we might make a little *Church*, fitting it with some *Hangings*. This we resolved on; at least, I thought it very good advice; for, the more dispatch, and Expedition, the better for us, we being out of our *Monasteries*, and I likewise in some fear of opposition, as one sufficiently warned by the former *Foundation*: and therefore I desired, Possession might be taken presently, before the thing were known: of the same opinion likewise was *Fr. Dominicus Bannez*; so we determined with all speed to proceed accordingly.

We

We came to Medina del Campo on the Vigil of the Assumption of our Lady in August about Mid-night; and to avoid all noise, we alighted hard by Saint Anne's Church, and from thence went a foot to the House. It was a great mercy of God, that we met with none of that place then going about to shut up the Bulls that were to run the next day. The apprehension, and amazement, we went in, made me, I could remember nothing: but our Lord, who takes care of those, that desire to serve him, delivered us; for indeed no other thing was intended herein, but his Holy Service. Being come to the House, we entred into a Court, where the Walls seemed much decayed, but not so much as they did afterward, in the day-time, when one might discern it better. It seems our Lord was pleased, that the good Father shold be so blind, as not to perceive, that here was no convenience at all for setting up the B. Sacrament. When I had viewed the Portall, I found, there was work enough, to carry away the Earth, it being ill floored, and the Walls unplaistered: the night was almost spent, and we had brought only a few Hangings (three, as I take it) which, for the whole length of the Hall, were as good as nothing; so that I knew not what to do, for I plainly saw, it was not convenient to Erect the Altar there. It pleased our Lord, who would have the thing speedily effected, that that Gentle-womans Steward had in the house divers pieces of Arras, that were his Mistresse's, and a sute of Blew Damask; having likewise received a Charge from her (so very kind she was) to give us whatever we shkould ask. As soon as I saw such excellent Furniture, I exceedingly praised our Lord, as did likewise the rest of my Companions; but we knew not what to do for Nails, and now was no time to buy them: We began to search for them in the Walls; and at last after some pains got good store: and instantly the men bestirr themselves in putting up the Hangings, and we women in carrying away the Earth, and sweeping the Floor. We made so good speed, that, when it began to be day, the Altar was Erected, and dressed up, and the Bell hanged in a Turret, and without delay the first Mass said. This sufficed for taking Possession, but we stopped not here; for, there we set up also the most Holy Sacrament; and through certain chinks of a Door that was over-against the Altar, we saw, and heard Mass, having no other Convenience. I was very well contented herewith; for, to me it was an exceeding great Joy, to see one Church more, in which the B. Sacrament was: though it lasted but a while; for, when Mass was done, I chanced to look out of a Window into the Court, and saw the Wall in some places fallen quite down, which to repair, asked many days, and vast charge. O my God, when I beheld his Divine Majesty exposed in the Street, in a time so dangerous, as we now live in,

by reason of these *Lutherans*, what a horror, and anguish seized my very heart? Hereto was added a strong apprehension, I had, of all the difficulties, that they might object to me, who had before greatly opposed it; and I saw plainly, they had reason. Now it seemed to me impossible to go forward, with what I had begun: for, as formerly all appeared to me exceeding easie, considering, that it was undertaken for *God*; so now the *Temptation* pursued me so close, and pinched me in such sort, that methought I never had received any Favour from him: only my own basenes, and inability were still before me. Relying therefore on so miserable a support, how could I expect a good Effect therefrom? Had I been alone, methinks I should have passed it over better; but the considering that my *Companions* were to return back to the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation* after all that opposition, which they had sustained, when they went forth, this indeed went very near to me. Methoughts also, that, the very beginning being thus err'd-in, all that, which in *Prayer* I had understood, our *Lord* would do, had nothing of Truth in it. After this also I began to suspect, whether it were not an *Illusion*, whatever formerly I had heard in *Prayer*; which proved not a *less*, but *greater* affliction, than all the rest; for, it made me extreamly tearful, lest the Devil had deceived me.

O my *God*, what a thing is it to see a Soul, which you are pleased to leave in such pains! Certainly, when I remember this, and some other *Afflictions*, which I have suffered in these *Foundations*, methinks bodily pains, (though I have felt great ones) in comparison of this, are incon siderable. Notwithstanding all this sadnes, which lay extream heavy upon me, I discovered it not externally in the least to my *Companions*, because I would not add to their grief. In this Condition I continued till Evening, when *F. Rector* of the *Society* sent a *Father* to visit me, who Encouraged, and Comforted me very much. I acquainted him not with all my Sorrows, but only with that, which I felt, with seeing our selves in the *open Street*. I began to treat with him about Hiring us a *Houſe*, (cost what it would) to the end we might remove thither, whilst this was Repairing, and fitting up for us. I likewise began to take heart upon seeing the concourse of People hither, and not a word said taxing us of *folly*: and this was a mercy of *God*; for, had they reflected on it, they had done discreetly to have taken away the *B. Sacrament* from us. At present I reflect on my own *Stupidity*, and the *inadvertency* of all the rest, in not *consuming* it; but that, methoughts, if that were done, all were undone.

Notwithstanding all the diligence used in seeking out a *Houſe*, none was found

found to let, in all the Town, so that I was much troubled Night and Day, because, though I set men to guard, and watch the *B. Sacrament* continually, yet I was in fear, and doubtful lest they might fall asleep, and so I rose in the night to watch it at a Window, whence by the bright shining of the Moon I could see it very plainly. All these days huge multitudes flocked to see our little Church, and it not only disliked them not, but increased their Devotion, to behold our Lord as it were once more in a Stable; and his Divine Majesty (as who is never weary of abasing himself for us) seemed unwilling to remove thence. Some eight days after, a certain Merchant [Blasius de Medina] seeing our necessity, himself living in a very fair House, intreated us to go into the upper part of it, where we might dwell, as in a House of our own: he gave us also a very large Hall, he had, with a gilded Roof, to serve us for a Church. And a Lady, that lived hard by the House, we had bought, called *Donna Helena de Quiruga*, a great Servant of God, told us, she would help us, that so the Chapel might be speedily taken in hand for reposing the *B. Sacrament*; and likewise, that the House might in such sort be fitted up for us, that we might therein enjoy Clauſure. Some others also very liberally contributed towards our maintenance; but this Lady was she, that most of all assisted us. Upon this I began to be more at rest, because we had perfect clauſure in the house whither we removed, and began to say the Office. The good Father Prior of S. Anne's used extraordinary Diligence, in fitting, and Repairing our house, making great haſt, for indeed he Laboured extreme hard; yet, notwithstanding, it held him two months, but was accommodated so well, that we could conveniently dwell in it for divers years, and through the goodness of our Lord it hath still gone on Improving.

Whilst I was here, I was not unmindful of, but rather very solicitous for, having some like Covens of Religious Men; but, wanting one to begin the businesse, I knew not what to do. At last I resolved to Treat very privately with F. Prior aforesaid, Fr. Antonio de Heredia about it, to see, what he would advise me; and so I did. He was exceeding glad, when he understood it, and promised me, that himself would be the first: which, as soon as I heard, I took for a jest, and so I told him: because though he was ever a good man in his Order, Retired, Studious, and a Lover of his Cell, yet I did not think, that he was a man for the purpose to begin such a thing; nor that he had Spirit, and strength enough to go through with the rigour, and austerity of Life, requisite, he being so very tender, and unaccustomed to so severe Penance. But be assured me, it was otherwise; and certified me, that it was a good while, since our

Lord

Lord had called him to a *stricter Life*, and also that he had already purposed to become a *Carthusian*, for the *Fathers* of that *Order* had told him, they would admit him. For all this, I was not fully satisfied, though I was glad to hear it; and I intreated him, that we might suspend a while, and he in the mean time make tryal of himself in the things, whereof he was to Vow the obseruance. He did so, and spent a Year thus; wherein he *underwent* such Troubles, and Persecutions by false Accusations, as sufficiently discovered, that our *Lord* meant to try him: yet he bare all so courageously, and went on so advancing in *Spirit*, that I greatly praised our *Lord*; lince, methought, his *Divine Majesty* went hereby disposing him for *this Work*. A litle after another *Father* of our *Order* chanced to come hither, a *Young man*, and a *Student* in *Salamanca*, and he came for a *companion* to another *Religious man*, who related strange things to me concerning this *Father* (whose Name was *Fr. John de la Croce*). I rendered thanks to the *Divine Majesty*: and in discoursing with him he gave me great Satisfaction: I understood by him, that he was minded likewise to enter into the *Carthusians Order*: thereupon I immediately acquainted him with my design, and earnestly intreated him to defer, till our *Lord* gave us a *Covent*; Representing the great benefit, it would be, if he meant to Reform, to endeavour it in his *own Order*, and that he would much more serve our *Lord* thereby. He promised me to do so, if the busines proved not too tedious. When I saw, I had gotten two *Friers* already, to begin with, methought the work was done, and dispatched; though concerning *Father Prior* I was not yet altogether satisfied; and so, for this reason, as likewise for want of a place to begin such a *Covent* in, I was glad, there was some delay. The *Nuns* gained daily credit with the People, who were much satisfied concerning them, and bore singular Affections to them, and (to my thinking) very justly: for, all their care was, how every one might best serve *God*.

They kept the same manner of life in every thing punctually, as did those of *S. Josephs* in *Avila*, having the same *Rule*, and *Constitutions*. Our *Lord* began to call some to take the Habit, and the Favour he did them were so eminent, as I was astonished therat: It is sufficiently evident, that he seeks nothing else, but to be Loved, for Love that he may Love. Eternally blessed be *He*. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

*Of certain Favours, our Lord doth to the Nuns
of these Monasteries. She likewise directeth the
Prioresses, how to Behave themselves towards
them.*

I Thought it not amiss, ere I proceed further, (because I know not how long our *Lord* may spare me life, or leisure; for, methinks at present I have very little) to lay down some Directions for the *Prioresses*, that they may be able to discern, and know the way of conducting those under their charge to greater *Perfection*, and with the Improvement of their Souls, though not so much content to themselves. It is observable, that, when I was commanded to write these *Foundations*, leaving out the first of *S. Joseph of Avila*, which was presently written, about the time when it was Erected, there were already Founded (through *Gods blessing*) seven *Houses* more, including that of *Alva de Tormes*, which is the last of them: and the reason why no more have been Founded, was, my *Superior's* restraining, and employing me otherwise, as hereafter shall be seen. Now, considering what hath befallen in these *Monasteries* relating to Spiritual matters, I have seen the necessity, there is, of what I now intend to say: his *Divine Majesty* grant, I may rightly deliver that which I see so necessary to be spoken.

But, since the things, I am now going to speak of, are no *Illusions* of the Devil, it is requisite, that the Spirits of the *Religious* be not hereby terrified: for (as else-where I have said, writing some *little Rules* for the *Sisters* [the way of *Perfection*]) whilst we live in *Obedience*, with *Purity of Conscience*, our *Lord* never permits the Devil so far to prevail, as to deceive us in such sort, as shall damage the Soul; nay, rather he himself is worsted, and deceived thereby; and he knowing it, I am perswaded, *He doth not so much cause this Evil in us*, as *our own perverse Inclinations*, and ill *Humours*, (especially, if there be *Melancholy*) for, the Nature of *Women* is *weak*, and the *self-love*, that rules in us, very *subtil*; so that divers Persons (*men*, and *women*) besides the *Nuns* of these *Monasteries*, have come

to me with this malady ; whom I have manifestly discovered, to have been deceived by themselves, though against their Wills. I believe, the Devil interposes, thereby to delude us : but, of very many, whom (as I was saying) by Gods goodness I have seen, I have not perceived, that his *Majesty* hath so abandoned them [as they imagine :] it may be, he is pleased to exercise them with these Impressions of fears, that they may gain Experience.

The things that concern *Prayer*, and *Perfection*, are, by reason of our sins, so decayed in the World, that it is necessary for me to declare my self in this manner : For, if when there is no danger at all, men are afraid to go this way ; what would they do, if we should tell them, there were some ? And it is true, that in every thing there is some danger, and therefore, whilst we live in this miserable World, we ought in all things to proceed with *fear* ; beseeching our *Lord*, that he would teach us the True way, and not forsake us. But (as I think, I have formerly said) if in any thing *God* permit that there should be danger, is it chiefly there, when persons most seriously apply themselves to think on *God*, and reform their lives ? O my *Lord*, how evidently do we see, that you many times deliver us from the dangers, into which we voluntarily cast ourselves, even to offend you ! and shall we after this, believe, you will not deliver us, when aiming at nothing more, than to please, and delight ourselves with *you* ? This I can never believe. Possibly, for accomplishing some secret Judgments of his own, *God* may permit some things, which may fall out sometimes after one, sometimes after another manner : but, *out of good he never drew evil*. So that this should serve to excite us, to walk faster, and more vigorously in our way, that we may please our Celestial *Spouse*, and so find *him* sooner ; but not make us forbear, or slaken our pace : and should encourage us to march stoutly over the rough, and craggy passages of this life, so full of *Cliffs*, and *Precipices* ; but in no wise make us cowardly, or faint-hearted ; since in the end, proceeding with *Humility*, we shall, through *Gods* mercy, arrive at the Heavily *Jerusalem*, where, whatever we have here suffered, shall seem little, or nothing to us, in-comparison of the repose, and happiness, there enjoyed.

Now, as those little *Dove-coys* of the *B. Virgin* our *Lady* began to increase, and fill, the *Divine Majesty* also began to discover his greatnesses in these poor weak *Women*, though strong in their desires, and in disengaging themselves from all Created things ; for 'tis that, that chiefly unites a Soul to its *Creator*, walking with Purity of Conscience. This I needed not mention, or go about to prove ; for, without this real *Separation* from the *Creatures*, it seems to me impossible not to offend our *Lord* : but,

as all their Discourses, and Conversation is only concerning the things of *God*; so it seems he is not willing to estrange himself from them, or not to afford them his delicious presence. This is that, I now see, and can say of a truth: Let them, who shall come after, and Read this, fear; and, if they see not then, what we now find here, let them not impute it to the times; since 'tis always a time for *God* to confer Favours, and great Rewards on such as serve him in earnest; but let them endeavour to discover, whether in this thing there be any breach, or failing in them, and amend it.

I have heard say, sometimes, concerning these beginnings of Religious Orders, that (in regard they were the Foundations thereof) therefore our Lord bestowed on these Saints gone before us, greater Favours; and indeed so it is: but we also are to consider, that we are Foundations of those that shall succeed, and that, if we, who are now living, had not fallen, or degenerated from the heroick Actions, of our Predecessors, and that those, who come after us, did not the like, the Structure would continue ever firm, and entire. What advantage is it to me, that the Saints my Predecessors were so Holy, if I, who follow, prove such a wretched, and heinous Sinner, as that I leave the House by my pernicious Courses quite spoiled and ruined? For 'tis manifest, that those, who come after us, do not so much mind those, who lived long ago, as the present, whom they see. A fine business indeed, that I should excuse myself in these things by my not being of those first, and never consider the vast difference that is between my life, and virtue, and their's, on whom God bestowed such signal Graces, and Favours. O my Lord, what forced excuses are these, and how manifest Cheats! It grieves me, O my God, that I am so bad, and have so little served you. I well perceive, the fault lies all on my side, that you do not me those Favours, which you have done my Predecessors: I am confounded, O Lord, when I compare my Life with their's, and cannot speak this without Tears. I see, I have lost that, which they got with so much toil, and pains; and no way can I complain of You. Nor is it fit, any should complain; but, if they see their Order declining, and decaying in any thing, let them endeavour to be such Stones in it, as may serve to repair the Building; since our Lord will not be wanting to further them herein.

But, to return to what I was saying (for I have much digressed:) The Favours, our Lord doth in these Monasteries, are so great, that they astonish me: for he conducts them all by Meditation; and some attain to perfect Contemplation; others are advanced forward so far, as to arrive to Ecstasies, and Raptis; to others our Lord doth Favours of another kind, bestowing on them likewise Revelations, and Visions, such as

is manifestly discerned, do proceed from *God*. There is never a one of these *Monasteries* at this day, wherein are not found either *one*, or *two*, or *three* such. Not that I think *Sanctity* to consist herein, nor is it my meaning only to commend them; but to let it appear, that the *Advices*, I desire here to give, are not beside the purpose.

CHAP. X.

Some Directions are laid down touching matters of Prayer.

IT is not my Intention, or aime, that what I shall now say should be held so certain, and true, as to be taken for an infallible Rule; for, it were absurd, to expect this in matters so *abstruse*. But, there being in this way of the *Spirit* many paths, possibly I may deliver something that may be pertinent touching some of them: if therefore they, who walk not therein, understand me not, it is perhaps, because they take another Path; and, if I benefit none at all, I beseech our *Lord* to accept my good will; since he knows, that although I have not experimented all this in my self, yet I have observed it in other Souls.

And first, I would shew (according to my slender capacity) wherein the substance of *perfect Prayer* consists. For I have light on some, who conceive the whole busines to lie in *thinking*; and, if they can keep their *thoughts* strongly *fixed* upon *God* (though by offering great violence to themselves) prefently imagine, they are *Spiritual Persons*: and, if they do never so little divert themselves (unable to continue longer intent) though to good things, instantly are extreamly dejected, and fancy, they are undone. Persons of Learning will not have such conceits, and ignorance, (though I met with some that have,) but 'tis good for us *Women* to be instructed concerning all things. I say not, but that it is a great Favour of our *Lord*, to be able to keep our Thoughts continually busied about him, and be always Meditating on his Works; yea, it is well done also to endeavour this: but it is to be understood, that all *Imaginations* are not in their own Nature fit for this; but to Love, all are fit. The Causes of this Inconstancy, and roving of the Imagination, I have elsewhere Written (to my thinking) not *all* the Causes, that is impossible; but *some* of them: Therefore at the present I discourse not thereof; only I would fain have it understood, that the *Soul* is not the *thinking*, nor yet

willing ; for, so it would be too unhappy, and miserable (as is said above,) though it be fit, it should govern it self by their means : whence the proficiency of the Soul consists not in much thinking, but rather much loving. And, if ye ask me, how this love is got : I answ're, by resolving to do, and suffer, for God, and afterward in effect doing so, when occasion shall be offered.

It is very true, that, by the thinking, how much we owe to our Lord, who He is, and what are we, the Soul acquires a generous Resolution, which is of great Merit, and for Beginners very convenient ; but, let it be understood, when nothing to be done intervenes, that concerns the point of Obedience ; and the good of our Neighbour, to which Charity binds us : for, in such cases, when either of these two present themselves, we must straight quit that, which we so much desire to give to God ; which (as we conceive) is our being solitary, and retired ; meditating on him ; delighting our selves with, and rejoicing in the Caresses, and Favours, he doth us. To leave this on either of the two forefaid occasions, is to please, and content him, and to do for him that, which with his own mouth he himself pronounced to be so : *That, which ye have done for one of these my little ones, ye have done for me.* Mat. 2.5. And, as to that which concerns Obedience, he would have us go in no other way : for, whoever loves him indeed, will follow him ; and He was Obedient even to death. Phil. 2. Now, if this be true, whence comes that disgust, which for the most part is found in us, when, for a great part of the day, we have not been retired, and absorpt in God, although we have been employed about these other things ? In my Opinion, from two Causes.

I. The first, and principal, is Self-love ; which, though very subtilly, interminglith it self here, and lies undiscovered ; being a willingness rather to please our selves, than God. For, 'tis manifest, that, when a Soul hath begun to tast how sweet our Lord is, it finds a greater gust by the bodie's being at rest, and the Soul's being caressed with Internal Consolations. O the Charity of those, that truly love this Lord, and know their own condition ! How restless are they, if they find, they can Contribute the least Assistance to the furthering of but one Soul, and to increasing in it the Love of God, or can afford it any Comfort, or free it from any danger ! Ah how little rest takes such a one in whatever particular Repose of his own ! And, when with his Works he cannot, yet still in earnestly Importuning our Lord with his Prayers for those many Souls, he sees in great Peril of Destruction, and Compassionating them exceedingly, he willingly loseth his own Contentment, and Delight [in Prayer] and reckons

reckons this loss gain : For he regards not his own Satisfaction, but meerly, how best to accomplish the Will of *God*. The same it is in the matter of *Obedience* : It would be strange, *God* should plainly tell us, he would have us perform a thing, that much concerned him, and we should do nothing, but stand gazing on him, because this most conduced to our ease, and delight. A ridiculous kind of advancing, this, in the Love of *God*. This is to tye his hands, upon a conceit, that he can benefit us no more ways, but one.

Besides what I have found by Experience, I know some Persons, with whom I have conversed, that have instructed me in this Truth, when much afflicted for my enjoying so little leisure : Whence I also pitied them, seeing them perpetually employed in busines, and severall things, which *Obedience* exacted from them, and I thought with my self (as likewise I told them) that it was impossible, that, amidst such a Tumult, and confused Hurly-burly of Affairs, the *Spirit* should increase in them ; because, as then they had not much thereof. O my Dear *Lord*, how different are your ways from our Conceits ! And what require you of a Soul already resolved to Love you, and resigned up into your hands, save only to obey, and inform it self what is most for your Service, and meerly desire that ! She needs not seek out ways, nor deliberate about chusing them ; for now her will is yours. You, O my *Lord*, take upon your self the care of Conducting her that way, wherein she may most profit. And though the *Superior* take not Care of guiding her in the way most advantagious for her, but only of her Performing those Offices, which he thinks necessary for the *Community* ; yet you, O my *God*, do ; and go disposing the Soul, and her Imployments, in such sort, that (without knowing how) the Souls find themselves advanced in *Spirit*, and greatly improved by observing with all Fidelity such Injunctions : Insomuch that they are afterward astonished thereat. Such a one was that Person, whom I spake with a few days since, who for fifteen Years space was by *Obedience* so detained in *Offices*, and *Government*, and thereby so harassed out, that in all the time he remembred not to have had one day free to himself : although he still procured (the best he could) some litle spare time every day for *Prayer*, and purging his Conscience. A Soul, this, the most addicted to *Obedience*, that ever I saw ; insomuch that he even Imprints the same on all, he Converses with. Our *Lord* hath abundantly rewarded him ; for (without his knowing how) he enjoys that so-much-valued *Liberty* of *Spirit*, which the perfect have, wherein consists all the Happiness, which can be wished in this Life : for, desiring nothing, he possefleth all. They neither fear, nor covet any thing of this *World* ; *Craffes* do not distract,

sturb, nor *pleasures*, and prosperity soften them : in fine, there is nothing can Rob them of their Peace, which depends on *God* alone ; and, since nothing can take away *God* from them, the fear of losing nothing, except him, can afflict them. For, every thing else in this World is, in their Opinion, as if it were not at all ; since nothing thereof raises, or destroys their content.

Selst. O happy *Obedience*, O happy *Distraction*, that is caused by that, which enriches us with so great good ! Nor is this the only Person neither ; for there are others, whom I have known in like sort, though not seen these many years ; whom asking, wherein they had employed themselves, I perceived, their whole time was spent in Works of *Obedience*, and *Charity*. On the other side I saw them so very much bettered, and advanced in *Spiritual* matters, as made me wonder. On then, my *Daughters*, let there be no neglect, but, when *Obedience* calls you to exterior Employments, as, for example, in the *Kutchin*, know, that our *Lord* goes along with you affliting you both in the *Interior*, and *Exterior*, amidst the very *Pots*, and *Dishes*.

Selst. I remember, a *Religious man* told me, he had purposed, and made a firm Resolution, never to refuse, or dispute any thing enjoyed him by his *Superior*, whatever trouble it put him to : And one day it fell out, that, being quite tired, and so spent with Labour, that he could not stand on his *legs*, as he was about to rest himself (for it was almost night) he sat down a little ; when his *Prior* coming, and finding him, bad him take the *Spade*, and go dig in the *Garden* : he saying nothing (though so faint, that he could not Work) took the *Spade* ; and, as he was going through a certain Passage, by which they went into the *Garden* (which I my self saw, many Years after this Relation, upon occasion of my Founding a *Monastery* in the *Town*) *Christ* our *Lord* appeared to him with his *Cross* on his *Shoulders*, so weary, and spent, as made him sufficiently Understand, that what he then suffered, was nothing, in Comparison.

I believe, the Devil, perceiving that no Path brings us sooner to the highest Perfection, than this of *Obedience*, proposeth so many disgusts, and difficulties under the colour of good. And let this be well marked, and they will see plainly, that I speak Truth. It is evident, that the highest perfection consists not in interior *Consolations*, or Delights, nor in great *Extasies*, and *Raps*, nor in *Visions* and *Revelations*, nor in having the *Spirit of Prophecy* ; but in the *Conformity* and *Union* of our *will* to *Gods* ; so, as that there is nothing, which we understand he wills, but we with all our hearts will likewise the same ; and with like Clearfulness take

as well the bitter, and unpleasant, as the sweet, and delicious, knowing it to be his *Divine Majestie's* pleasure. Now this seems extream difficult, not so much to do the thing, but to take Content, and Delight also in the doing that, which is every way contrary, and repugnant to our *Nature*. It cannot be denied, but that this is true : Yet such is the power of *Love* (if it be perfect) to make us forget all this our own content, to please him, we love. And so indeed it is, that the most toilsome Labours, in the considering, that thereby we please *God*, are rendered sweet unto us : and in this manner they, who are thus far arrived, love persecutions, disgraces, and injuries.

This is so certain, clear, and evident, that I need not insist on it. That, which here I would explain, is, the reason, why *Obedience* is (in my judgment) the speediest, or best means to enstate us in this so happy a condition : and it is this ; since we of our selves have not the command of our own Wills, so as purely and sincerely to bestow them entirely on *God*, some course we ought to take to render them, together with our understandings also, subject to him ; now, for the bringing them into such Subjection, *Obedience* is the most compendious, expedite, and sure way. For, to think to reduce the *will* by sufficient *Reasons*, and *Arguments*, is endless ; and, as a tedious, so a dangerous, course ; for our *Nature*, and *Self-love* have such store of *them* on their side, that we shall never come to any Issue ; and many times what is most rationall (and it dislike us) seems absurd unto us, from an unwillingness, we have, to go above it. I have so much to say of this Subj^t, that we should never make an end of discoursing about this inward *Conflict*, and the many ways, whereby the *Devil*, the *World*, and our own *Sensuality* Labour, to make us violate our *Reason*. Now what *Remedy* ? This : that, as here, in *Suits*, in a very doubtful case, an *Arbitrator* is chosen, into whose hands both parties, Weary with going to *Law*, commit the matter, standing to his award, for Composing the Difference : so our Soul, for freeing it self from all *Contention*, with the *Devil*, or *Sensuality*, chuses an *Umpire* ; to wit, her *Superior*, or *Confessor*, with a firm Resolution never to sue more, or think further on her cause, but rely on the Words of our *Lord*, who saith ; *He that heareth you, heareth me* ; and not heed what her own will is. This *Subjection* his *Divine Majestie* so highly values (and that justly ; for it is making him *Master* of that *Free will*, he hath given us) that, by exercising our selves therein several times, and by thus disengageing our selves, we come by this painful exercise (though with a thousand *Conflicts* ; that seeming Ridiculous to us, which is judged in our own Cause) to Conform our selves to that, which is enjoyed us ; and so, with, or without, Pain, at last

last we do it ; and our *Lord* so far assists us on his part, that, for the same cause, that we thus *subject* our own *will*, and *reason* for his sake to others, he makes us *Masters*, and *Lords* of our selves. And, being *Lords* of *our selves*, we may entirely bestow our selves on *God*, giving him a pure, and sincere will, to the end he may unite it to his own ; beseeching him, to make the Fire of his Love descend from Heaven, to burn up, and consume this Sacrifice, removing all that, which may displease him, since there is no more to be done on our parts, we (though with much pains) having laid it on the *Altar* ; and (as far as lies in our power) kept it from touching, or Smelling of Earth.

It is evident, none can give, what he hath not ; but he himself must first have it. Now, believe me, for the obtaining this Treasure, there is no way better, than to take the pains to *dig* it out of this *Mine* of *Obedience* : and the deeper we dig, the more we shall find ; and the more we *subject* our selves to others, having no other will, but that of our *Superiors*, the more we shall be *Masters* of our will, to conform it to that of *God*. See now, *Sisters*, whether the quitting the Delights of Solitude be not well rewarded. I tell you, that, for want of it, ye will not be less disposed for the obtaining this Union mentioned ; which consists in making our Wills all alone with *Gods*. This is the Union I desire, and would fain see in all, and not certain *Abstractions*, and those very pleasing, and delicious *Suspensions*, that befall some, to which they have *affixed* the name of *Union* ; and such it may be, in case that accompany it, which I spoke of ; but, if after such suspension there be little *Obedience*, and our own will, this will becomes united to *Self-love* (in my opinion,) and not to the will of *God*. His *Divine Majesty* grant, that I may so practise it, as I do well understand it.

II. The *second* Causé (to my thinking) of this *disgust* is, that, there being in *Solitude*, and *Retirednes* fewer occasions of Offending *God*, for some can never be wanting (since the Devils are found to be in every place, and our selves likewise;) it seems, the Soul proceeds with more *purity* ; and, if it be afraid of offending him, it is a very great Consolation, to be out of all danger of stumbling. And indeed this seems to me a stronger Reason to desirer the not Conversing with any, than that of the great Consolations, and Guts from *God*. But here it is, my *Daughters*, and not in Corners, but in the throng of Occasions, that your love must appear ; and, believe me, for the defects that may be therein (and likewise some little falls) our gain is Incomparably greater every way. But remember, that I always speak upon Supposition, that one be employed in those matters of *Obedience*, and *Charity* : for, except this be inserted,

I constantly maintain, that *solitude* is better ; and that we are to desire it, though busied in those *Employments* mentioned, indeed this desire continually attends Souls that sincerely love *God*. I say then, it is a *gain* unto us ; for, such occasions make us understand, who we are, and how far our virtue extends : since a Person that lives always retired (how Holy soever in his own Opinion) knows not : whether he hath *Patience*, and *Humility* ; nor hath he any way to know it : just as, that a man is exceeding *strong*, and very *Valiant*, how shall it appear, if he never come in *Fight*? St. Peter, thought himself Courageous, and faithful enough to his *Lord*, but in the occasions, see how he behaved himself ; though after this Fall he got up again, and learnt, not to trust at all to himself ; but hereupon grew to place all his confidence in *God* ; and suffered that *Martyrdom*, we read of. Good *God*, that we understood well the greatness of our Misery ! In every thing is danger, and we perceive it not ; for this reason it is very beneficial to us to be enjoyed things, that discover, and manifest our own baseness. I take one day spent in the humble, and true knowledge of our selves, (notwithstanding it cost us many Afflictions, and Crosses) for a greater favour from our *Lord*, than many days of Prayer : and the rather, for that a true Lover loves every where, and ever thinks on his Beloved. It would be hard, that Prayers could only be made in Corners ; and I already see, there will not be many hours thus to spare for them : But, O my *Lord*, what power with thee hath one sorrowful sigh issuing from the bottom of the Heart, when it feeleth, how it is not enough, that we are fain to live in this exile, but that we also want in it the convenience of being Solitary, and Retired, so to enjoy thee. Here it appears evidently, that we are his *Slaves*, willingly sold for his sake to this virtue of *Obedience* ; since, for it, we (in a sort) forego the enjoyment of *God* himself : and all this is nothing, if we consider, that He out of *Obedience* left the bosom of his Father, and came to be made our *Slave*. With what then can we repay, and by what Services recompence this favour ? It is necessary they proceed with caution, and in no wise so far neglect themselves in their Employments (though these of *Obedience*, and *Charity*) as not to retire often internally into themselves, and bethink themselves of their *God*. And let them believe me, it is not the long time, that makes Souls Improve in *Prayer* ; but, when, by *Obedience*, and *Charity* being called to other works, they shall employ themselves therein well, (as hath been said) this will so further them, that in a very short space they shall be better disposed for enflaming the Soul in the Love of *God*, than (wanting these) by busying themselves many hours in *Meditation*. All must descend from his most bountiful hand. Be *He* everlastingly blessed.

Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

She shews the Harm that may befall Spiritual Persons, by not Understanding, when they are to Resist the Spirit. She treats of the great Desires a Soul may have to Communicate; and of the Deceit, that may be therein.

I Have endeavoured very diligently to understand, whence proceeds that *Abstraction*, or great *Suspension* of mind, which I have seen some Persons have, to whom our *Lord* imparteth eminent *Consolations*, and Favours in *Prayer*, and who are not wanting to dispose themselves for the receiving such Graces. I discourse not at present of an *Abstraction*, wherewith a Soul is suspended, and rapt by the *Divine Majesty*; for, of this else-where I have writ sufficiently, and in such cases there needs not much be said; because if it be a true *Rapt*, how much soever we strive to resist it, we are able to do nothing: where is to be noted, that the *Violence*, which hinders us from being Masters of our selves, lasts but a little while. But so it falls out many times, that there begins a *Prayer of Quiet* in the manner of a *Spiritual sleep*, which suspends the Soul so, that unless we understand, how to proceed therein, we may lose much time; and, through our own Fault, and with little Merit waste our strength. I would be very glad, I could here tell how to declare my self, which is so difficult, I know not whether I shall be able: but I am certain, that, would those Souls believe me, that are carried away with this *Delusion*, they may understand me. I know *some*, that have continued thus absorpt *seven or eight Hours*, Persons of rare Virtue, and all seemed to them to be *Extasie*, and *Rapt*; and any kind of virtuous Exercise so recollected them, that they went presently out of themselves, supposing that they should do ill to resist our *Lord*; so that by little and little they might have died, or become stupid, had no remedy been used to them. That which on this occasion I know, is, that, when our *Lord* begins to regale, and carets a Soul (our Nature is so in Love with *Consolations*, and *Delights*) it is so taken up with this Gust, that it would not willingly stir, or lose it for any thing. For, to speak Truth, it is more delicious, than any Pleasure of this *World*; especially, when it meets with a soft Nature, and that the *understanding* (or, to speak more properly, the *Imagination*) be of such a temper; not *sitting*; but *such*, as in apprehending, and fixing on a thing, there *stays*, without diverting it self from it: as is discerned in divers

divers Persons, who, beginning to think on a thing (though not about God) or looking at any thing without reflecting upon what they look at, continue absorpt : Persons of a calm, and soft disposition, that through Inadvertency seem to forget, what they are going to say. The same thing falls out here, agreeable to ones weak Naturals, or Constitution. What then must it be, if they prove Melancholick ? They will discover a thousand pleasant Fancies, and Illusions.

Of this Humour I shall discourse a little below : but, though there be nothing of Melancholy , yet what I have said, falls out notwithstanding ; and that as well in Persons, who are found to be spent with immoderate Penances : for (as I said) love beginning to afford them sensible Consolation , they too much suffer themselves to be carried away therewith : and, in my judgment, they would love a great deal better, in not permitting themselves to be thus assotted ; for that in this point of Prayer they may very well make resistance. For , as when the Constitution is weak, there is perceived a fainting, and swooning, not suffering one to speak, or stir : so 'tis here, if no resistance be made ; because the vehemency of the Spirit, if Nature be feeble, draws it inward, and masters it.

They may ask me ; Wherein differs this from a Rapt ? Since at least in appearance 'tis the very same ; and they want not ground for it ; but indeed it is not. For, a Rapt, or Union of all the powers (as I said) lasts but a little while, and leaves great effects, together with an Internal Light in the Soul, and many other benefits ; and the understanding works nothing, but our Lord is He, that works in the Will . But here it is far otherwise : for, though the body be seized, and bound, yet the Will, Memory, and Understanding are not ; but all, though feebly, and perhaps without staying long upon any one thing, perform their Operations : here the difference appears, and discovers it self. For my own part, I found no benefit at all in this painful Feebleness of body, save only, that it had a good beginning ; it conduceth more, to employ this time well, than to continue so long time absorpt, and dozed. Much more may be Merited, by not quitting the Acts of the Community, and other things enjoyned by Obedience, and by not debilitating, and disabling themselves for it, than in letting themselves be carried away by such Recollection, which shortens their Life, and hinders their Obedience. Wherefore I advise the Prioreffes, to use all possible diligence, for removing, and stopping these so long Swoonings, which (in my opinion) are nothing else, but giving an occasion, and opportunity to the attraction, and hindring the Powers, and Senses, that they cannot do, what the Soul commands them ; and so deprive it of the

the gain, that by obedience, and much solitude to please God, it usually reappeth.

If she know it to be *Weakness*, let her forbid them *Fastings*, and *Disciplines* (I mean such as are not of *Obligation*, though there may come a *time*, and *circumstances*, wherein all may with good Conscience be prohibited too :) let her task, and employ them in exterior Exercises, that may divert them. And, though they have not these fainting Fits, yet if they keep their *Imagination* much at work, though it be in very sublime Points of *Prayer*, this is necessary : for, it often falls out, that such Persons are not Masters of themselves ; especially, if they have received some extraordinary Favour from our *Lord*, or have seen any Vision ; for then the Soul remains so affected, that she will think she sees it always ; when it is not so, but she saw it only once. Whoever find themselves in this Absorption, and Suspension for many days must endeavour to change their *subject* of *Meditation*, or divert it ; for, since it is in the things of *God*, it is no inconvenience, for the reason aforesaid, that either we stay upon one Point only ; or that we chuse another : for 'tis as pleasing to *God* many times, to ruminate, and meditate on the *Creatures*, and the power he shewed in creating them, as to be thinking on himself the *Creator*.

O deplorable *miserie* of Mankind, which for Sin hast so continued upon us, that, even in what is good, we have need of Limits, and a Measure, lest we fall to the ground, with the hazard of our Salvation in such sort, as not to enjoy it ! And indeed it is expedient for divers Persons, especially such, as have weak heads, and strong Imaginations, to understand this well, and that this is serving our *Lord* more, and very necessary. And, when any one sees, that, if she represent to her Imagination some *Mystery* of the *Passion*, or the *Glory of Heaven*, or any other such like subject, and that she continues therem divers days, and cannot (although she would) think on any think else, nor hinder her being absorpt, and deeply Imprinted with it, let her know, it is requisite, she should divert her self, as well as she can ; otherwise the time will come, when she will understand, and by Experience find the loss ; and that this proceeds from that, which I named ; to wit, either from great *bodily Weakness* ; or a *fixed Imagination* ; which is far worse. For, as an *Ideot*, if he think on any thing, is not Master of himself, nor can he divert himself, or think on any thing else ; neither can any Arguments prevail to remove his mind, having no command of his *Reason* ; in like manner it may fall out here, though this be a *delightful Madness*. But, what if the Party happen to be of a *Melancholick temper*? This may do such a one very much harm. I find not, for what this

fixed Imagination can be good ; for the reasons mentioned ; and the rather, because the Soul, being capable of enjoying *God* himself, who is infinite, is it seems imprisoned, whilst it is faltned, and bound to one only of his Greatnesses, or Mysteries ; there being so much to admire in *God*, that, if we would consider his *Works*, his ineffable *Perfections* would also hence discover themselves much more to us.

I say not, that in one Hour, or one day they should think on many Points, this happily would be to relish none well ; the things [I speak of] being so nice, and subtle, I would not have you apprehend, what never entred into my thought to say ; or mistake one thing for another. Indeed it is of such Importance, that you understand well this *Chapter*, that, although I have digressed in writing it, I do not repent it, nor would I have those grudge, to read it often, who shall not understand it well at first : especially the *Prioreffes*, and *Mistrefses* of the *Novices*, who are to instruct, and educate the *Sisters* in *Prayer*. For (unless they proceed with Care, and Caution in the beginning) they will see, that a long time, afterward, will be needful, to remedy such Infirmities.

If I should write the many Inconveniences, that I my self have known to follow hereon, they would see, I have reason to insit upon this Point so much. One instance I will relate, and by that the rest may be gathered. There were in one of our *Monasteries* two *Nuns* ; one a *Chorist* ; the other a *Lay-Sister* ; both of very high *Prayer*, attended with *Mortifications*, and *Humility*, as likewise other Vertues ; being much regaled by our *Lord*, and to whom he communicates of his greatness ; in particular they are so loose from things of the World, and so ravished with his *Love*, that they seem not (though we desire never so much to try, and exercise them) to be behind (according to our Meanness) in corresponding with the Favours, that our *Lord* doth them. I have spoken thus much of their Vertue, that those, not so qualified, may fear the more. It happened once, that there began to seize them certain violent *Impulses* of enjoying our *Lord*, which they were not able to keep off, or hinder ; which seemed to them somewhat to abate, when they Communicated, and so they dealt with their *Confessors*, that Leave might be granted them to *Communicate* very often ; in such sort, that their Pain thereupon so far increased, that, except they *Communicated* every day, they thought they should dye. The *Confessors*, seeing such Souls, and withall such Intense desires (though one of them were a very *Spiritual Person*) judged this a proper Remedy for their Malady. Nor rested the matter here ; but one of them had her Pains so violent, that they must *Communicate* her betimes, to keep her alive (as she imagined :)

ned;) and they were persons that would not *counterfeit*, nor tell a *lye* for all the World. I was not there then, but the *Prioreſſ* writ to me what paſſed, and that she knew not, nor understood how to carry her ſelf toward them; and that ſuch, persons *conſiderable*, ſaid, that, ſince there was no other *Remedy*, they ſhould be *communicated*, when they pleaſed. I ſoon perceived the buſineſſ, for it was *Gods will* I ſhould; but ſaid nothing, till I came thither; for I feared, I might be deceived; and it was fit, he that had *approved* the Action, and the uſing that *Remedy*, ſhould not be *contradicted*, till I propoſed my Reaſons to him my ſelf.

He was ſo humble, that, as ſoon as I was come thither, and had ſpoke with him, he preſently believed me; the other, [Person that appro-
ved it] was not ſo ſpiritual, and indeed not at all in Comparison of *him*, was no way to be perſuaded, to conceive ſo of it; but I was not very ſo-
licitous concerning him, having not the ſame Obligations toward him. I
began to argue with theſe *Sisters*, and propoſe feſeral (to my thinking)
weighty Reaſons, to let them understand, it was a *fancy* only, to imagine,
they would *dye*, unleſſ they uſed this *Remedy*: They were ſo fully per-
ſuaded, and ſettled herein, that nothing prevailed, or could prevail, by way
of Reaſon. I ſaw, that thus I did no good upon them, and therefore re-
ſolved to tell them, that I alſo had theſe deſires, and yet *I* would *forbear*
communicating, to the end they miſt believe, that they were no leſſ
to do ſo, except then, when the reſt did; and that, if we muſt for-
this *aye*, well and good, *dye we would all three*; for, this *I* accounted
better, than to introduce the like *cuſtomes* in theſe *Monasteries*, where
were Persons, that Loved *God*, as much as they, and would have done as
much.

The *Harm* occaſioned by cuſtome, was ſo great, the Devil likewiſe
interpoſing, that, when they did not communicate, they ſeemed ready to
dye. I ſhewed great ſeverity toward them; for, the more I ſaw them de-
cline *Obedience*, and *Subjection*, because according to their Judgment, they
could do no otherwiſe, ſo muſt more evidently I ſaw it was a *Temptation*.
The *firſt* day they paſſed with *great pain*, the *ſecond* with ſomewhat *leſs*,
and thus by little and little it abated, ſo that, although I communicated, tor
it was enioyned me (otherwiſe, ſeeing them ſo weak, *I* ſhould not have
done it) they were well enough contented. A little after, *they*, and *all*,
knew, it was a *Temptation*, and that it was well, it was timely remedied:
for, not long after, there fell out in that *Monastery* ſome troubls with its
Superiors, not through their fault (and poſſibly below I may ſpeak ſomething
thereof) ſo that they would not have taken well ſuch cuſtomes, or
have endured them.

O

O what; as many of these Instances could I reckon ! I will mention only one (it was not in any of our Monasteries, but of S. Bernards:) There was in it a Religious Woman (very Vertuous indeed) that used much Discipline, and Fasting, and grew so extream weak, that every time she Communicated, or that there was any occasion of kindling her Devotion, presently she fell down on the ground, and continued thus eight, or nine Hours ; she, and all the Nuns thinking it to be a Rapt, or Ecstasy. This happened to her so often, that, unless it had been remedied, I believe, she would have suffered much harm thereby. The Fame of these Raps, and Ecstasies ran through all the Town ; I was sorry to hear it, because it was Gods pleasure, that I should know what it was ; and I feared what it would come to in the end. Her Confessor was a Father of my intimate acquaintance, and came to tell me the busines : I certified him, what I understood, and conceived of it, and that it was Weakness, and losing of time, and had not the shew of a Rapt ; wishing him to prohibit her Fastings, and Disciplines, and enjoyn her some Divertisement : She being obedient, punctually obserued him ; and a litle after, recovering strength, there was no sign, or return of a Rapt ; whereas, had it been a true Rapt indeed, no Remedy could have prevented it, till God pleased. For, so great is the Power of the Spirit, that our strength is not able to resist it ; and (as I have said) it leaves great Effects in the Soul, and a lassitude in the Body : not so this other ; no more, than if it had never been.

Hence therefore may be concluded, that we are to suspect all that, which shall subject us in such manner, as that we perceive our Reason not left free to us ; and that, this way, will never be attained Liberty of Spirit ; since one of it's properties, is, to find God in all things, and to be able to meditate on them ; all the rest is a subjection of the Spirit ; and, besides the harm, it doth to the body, it binds up the Soul, and hinders it's growth ; and, as when one Travels a Journey, and lights on a Way full of Blocks, or Bozgs, which, he cannot pass, or get out of, so it falls out with the Soul here in part, which, to advance forward, had need not only Walk, but Fly. O what a thing it is, when they say, or conceive, that they go absorpt in the Divinity ; so that they cannot help themselves, nor do any otherwise, so far are they Transported, and Suspended ; nor is any thing able to divert them ! Which happens often. Let them beware, I again, and again, advise them ; since, for a day, or four, or eight, there is no cause to fear, because it is no strange thing, for a weak Nature to continue dozed, and stupid for this space ; but, if the Suspension proceed further, some Remedy is necessary. The benefit comprized in all this, is, that there is

no fault, nor Sin, nor cessation of Merit; but there are those inconveniences, which I have intimated. And much more as to that, which concerns receiving the *Communion*, would be greater; that by reason of the Love, such a Soul hath, it should not be subject (even in this) to it's *Confessor*, and *Priores*; and, though it be Afflicted with it's solitude, yet nor pafs on to any such Extremities therein. It is requisite also in this, as well as in other things, to mortifie them, and let them understand, that 'tis better for them not to do their own will, than to seek their particular Consolation. For, *Self-love*, may herein likewise intermingle it self; and it hath happened to me, that as soop as I had Communicated (the *Species* remaining yet as it were intire) if I saw others Communicating, I wilhed, I had not received, that I might receive again; and, this befallding me very often, I came afterward to discover (for, then there seemed not any thing that could herein satisfie me) that it proceeded rather from my own *Gulf*, than the *love of God*: because, when we come to the *Communion*, there being for the most part felt a Tenderness, and Sweetness, this was it, attracted me: for, if it had been for the possessing *God*, I had him already present in my Soul; if, for the satisfying their command, who enjoyn us to come to the *H. Communion*, I had done it already; if, for receiving the *Graces*, which are conferred in the *B. Sacrament*, I had already received them; at length I came to understand clearly, that I was not to desire to reiterate it, to have that sensible delight therein.

I remember, in a certain place where I lived, in which was a *Monastery* of ours, I knew a *Woman*, a very great Servant of *God*, by report of all the people, and she must needs be such; she Communicated every day; and had no constant *Confessor*, but went one while to one *Church* to Communicate there, and another while to another. I observed it, and had rather have seen her *Obedience* to one *Confessor*, than so frequent *Communions*; she lived in an House by her self, and (in my opinion) doing what she listed her self; but, she being good, that also must needs be so too: I sometimes spake to her hereof, but the much regarded not me; and justly, for she was much better, than I; yet in this thing I thought my self not mistaken. Ther came the Holy man *Fr. Pete* of *Alcantara*, and I got him to speak with her, but I was not afterward satisfied with the Relation that he gave me; and perhaps no more was he; excepting that we are such miserable *Creatures*, that we are never much pleased, but with those, that go our own way: for I believe this *Woman* served *God* more, and did more Penance in one Year, than I in many. She fell sick to death (for I tell the story to this end) and used great diligence to get

Mas said every day in her House, and to have the *B. Sacrament* given her. Her sicknes latting long, it seemed intollerable to the *Priest*, a great Servant of *God*, who often said *Mas* there, that she should be Communicated every day in her owne House; whereupon one day he would not Communicate her. (This must needs be a Temptation of the Devil, because it fell out, that that was the last day of her Life.) When she saw *Mas* ended, and that she remained without our *Lord*, she took such displeasure, and grew so angry at the *Priest*, that he came afterward to me to acquaint me therewith, being much scandalized at it: and I was extreamly troubled therat (for I know not, whether she were reconciled) because, as I think, she died prently. Hereby I came to know the great hurt, which the doing of our own will in any matter whatsoever, especially in a thing so important, occasioneth. For, he that comes so often to the *Communion*, ought so to understand his own unworthiness, as not to go to it upon his own head, and choice; but that, what we want for the worthy approaching to so great a *Lord*, which must needs be much, the vertue of *Obedience* may supply, in our being commanded it. Here was presented a fit occasion for this good Woman greatly to humble her self (whereby perhaps she had Merited more, than in Communicating) and withal to consider, that the *Priest* was in no fault, but that our *Lord* (seeing her misery, and how unfit for it she was) thus permitted, and ordained it. As was well done of a certain Person, that was, by prudent *Confessors* many times, forbidden the *Communion*, for she received it too often; who, though on the one side she very tenderly resented it, yet, considering on the other Gods honour more than her own content, did nothing but thank him, for having raised her up a *Confessor* to take care of her, that his Majesty might not come into so bad a lodging: and by these considerations she with great quiet of her Soul obeyed, though with a tender, and amorous kind of pain: and she would not for all the World have done otherwise, than she was commanded.

*Of
Love
to frequent
Communication*

But let them believe me, that this Love of God (yet I say not, that it is such, save in our opinion) which disquiets, and stirs the passions so, as to conclude, and end in some Sin against him, or in disturbing the Peace of a Soul enamoured, in such sort, that it doth not understand, nor is capable of reason, it is manifest, that in it we seek our selves, and the Devil will not sleep, nor forbear to put us to it, when he thinks he can do us the most harm; as he did this Woman: for indeed this accident terrified me much; though not because she would not believe me concerning it; for I do not conceive that a sufficient ground to hinder her Salvation, the good-

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goodness of God being so great, but the Temptation fell out in a difficult, and dangerous time. I have related this here, that the *Prioreffes* might beware, and the *Sisters* fear, consider, and examine, with what intent they approach to receive so high a Favour: if, to please God; they know already, that *Obedience* is more acceptable to him, than *Sacrifice*. Now, if this be so, and the merit greater, what is it that troubles us? I do not say, they should be without ~~an~~ humble grief; because all are not arrived to so great perfection, as to have none, to do that only, which they know is most acceptable to God. For, if the will be very much weaned from all interests of it's own, it is plain, it will not grieve, nay it will rather rejoice for having an occasion offered it of pleasing our Lord in a thing that costs it so dear; and will humble it self, and remain as well contented in Communicating Spiritually. But, because in the beginnings it is a Favour our Lord doth them, to afford them these ardent desires of approaching to him ('tis so likewise in the end also; but I say, *In the beginnings*, because it is then more to be esteemed) and because in other things which concern their Perfection, mentioned before, these Souls are not as yet so firm, and constant, it is well permitted them to feele some Tenderness, and regret, when it is forbidden, and taken from them; yet this with the quiet of the Soul, and exercising thereupon some acts of humility; but, when it is with Perturbation, and Passion, Stomacking, and repining at the *Prioreff*, and *Confessor*, let them take it for a manifest Temptation. But what would it be then, if any resolve (though the *Confessor* forbid her) to come to the *Communion*? I would not wish the Merit, that shall be got by such a *Communion*; for, in such matters we are not to judge for our selves, but he that hath the Keyes to open, and shut, he must judge. Our Lord vouchsafe to give us light well to understand things of so great Importance, and deny us not his Assistance, to the end that, from the Favours, he doth us, we take not occasion to displease him.

C H A P. XII.

How they should carry themselves toward those that are Melancholick.

[*The way of Perfection*] **T**Hese my Sisters of S. Joseph of Salamanca, where I now am writing this, have earnestly importuned me, to give some directions, how the Prioreffes should treat those that are troubled with *Melancholy*: for, all the diligence used, not to admit persons thus affected, suffices not; it being so subtile an humour, that for a need, it feigns it self dead, and so we discover it not, till it be past cure. I think, I have written somewhat, I know not what, hereof in a litle *Treatise* already Penned by me, yet I do not well remember it; the losf is not much, though I speak of it here, if it may please our Lord that I do it to purpose: it may well be, that it hath been said else-where, but I would say it a hundred times over, if I thought, I could light on any thing that might prove beneficial. The Artifces, which this humour goes seeking out, for the accomplishing of it's own will, are so many, that 'tis necessary to trace them, to know how to bear with it, and govern it, that it may not prejudice others.

It is observable, that all those, who are troubled with this humour, are not equally offensive, for, when it happens to light upon persons that are humble, and of a mild disposition (though they create trouble to themselves, yet) they do others no harm; especially, if they have a good understanding, and also according as they are more or les infested with this humour. I verily believe, the Devil useth it as an Instrument in some, to see if he can gain them; and, unless they proceed with great caution, will effect it: for, the aim, and endeavour of this humour is, to subdue the reason; which thereby remains obscured. Now, in such a case what will not our Passions do? For, where the use of Reason is not, one is no better than a Fool: and then that they should esteem themselves for, and be treated as reasonable Persons, when as they are not such, is an intolerable trouble; indeed those that are down-right sick of this Malady, deserve to be pitied, since they do no hurt. If there be any way to reduce these, and master them, it is to keep them in fear.

And also for those, in whom this so pernicious Malady hath but begun (for, though it be not so radicated, yet in fine it comes from the same humour, and root, and Springs from the same Stock) when other Arts prevail

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not, it is necessary to use the same Remedy, and that the *Superioreſſe* ſerve themſelves of the Penances of the *Order*, and endeavour ſo to ſubdue them, that they may understand, they are not to go away either more or leſs, with their own wills, nor at any time do, what they have a mind to. For, if they once perceive, that their Clamours, Ragings, and Disconfolations (wrought in them by the Devil, to drive them, if he can, into diſfair) have ſometimes prevailed herein, they are ruined; and one only ſuch is enough to diſquiet, and disorder a whole *Monastery*: For, in regard the poor wretch of her ſelf hath not ſtrength, nor any other to help to deſend her from the things by the Devil ſuggested to the Fancy, it is requiſite, that the *Superioreſſe* proceed with great vigilance in governing her, not only as to the Exterior, but Interior likewiſe: for, the uſe of Reaſon, which in the infirm person is obſcured, ought in the *Superioreſſe* to be very clear for her, leſt the Devil begin to captivate ſuch a Soul, uſing as his Inſtrument this Malady; which, when it happens to be at certain times, is a dangerous caſe; for that this humour then doth ſo rebeſſ, and opprefſ a perlon, that it destroys our Reaſon altogether (though in ſuch a caſe there is no fault, as there is none in *Ideots*, for all the extravagancies they commit.) But thoſe, who are not thus, and, though their reaſon be weak, have yet notwithstanding ſome liitle uſe thereof, and at other times are well in their Wits, it is neceſſary, ſhould not be permitted to begin to take their liberty at ſuch times, when they are not well; that thus afterward, when they are well, they may not alſo be their own gavernours; for the Devil's ſubtilty is very terrible. So that, if we mark it well, their principal aim is, to do whatever they have a mind to, and talk all that comes in their head; and obſerve other's defects, thereby to hide their own; and laſtly indulge their delight in every thing that pleaſeth them.

In fine, ſince they have nothing within them to make reſiſtance, because their paſſions are unmortified, and every one of them would have what ſhe deſires, what will be the conſequenee, if there be none to reſtraine them? I ſay it again (as one that have ſeen, and managed many perſons troubled with this evil) that there is no other remedy, but by all ways, and means poſſible to maſter them. If Words ſuffiſe not, let Punishments be uſed, and, if leſſer ſerve not, let greater: if keeping them a Month in Prison availe not, keep them four; for they cannot do their Souls a better Service. For (as I haue ſaid, and ſay again, ſince it much conneſſes ours to underſtand it) though at once or ſeveral times attempting, they cannot conqueſ them, yet ſince it is not a ſettled and conſirmed madneſſ, ſo as to excuse them from all Fault (for, though it be ſometimes, it is not always ſuch) that

must be done, which I have already directed ; and if it be not, the Soul is in great danger, unless, as I say, the reason be so far gone, as to make them do, what they do or say, because they can do no otherwise. It is a great mercy of God to them, who are infested with this Malady, to be subject to a Governour, for, herein consists all their good, for the danger, whereof I have spoken. And, if any one shall read this, let her for the Love of God consider, that possibly it may import her Salvation.

Mark { I know some Persons, that want but little of quite losing their judgment, yet have Souls so humble, and so fearing God, that, though they even dissolve into Tears within themselves, yet they do nothing, but that, which is commanded them, and bear their Infirmitie in doing as others do ; though this be a sore Martyrdome, and thereby they shall gain a greater Glory, sustaining, and suffering their Purgatory here, to escape it hereafter. But, I say it again, those, who will not do this willingly, let them by the Superiors be compelled thereto ; and let them not be deceived by foolish pity, lest they come all to be disturbed with their Extravagancies : for, besides the forementioned danger, there is another very considerable harm by the same person ; which is, that, when they see her (to their thinking) good, not knowing the influence, which this Infirmitie hath upon the Interior, our nature is so very miserable, that every on will appear to them that she is Melancholick, that so they may bear with her the more, and in effect also the Devil will make them firmly believe so ; and thus will he come to make such a havock, as when it shall be discovered, and known, will be difficult to remedy. This is of such Importance, that it is by no means to be endured, there should be any neglect herein ; but that, if she, who is Melancholick, resist her Superior, or Prioress, she pay for it, as one that is well, and be not spared in any thing : if she give her Sister an ill word, the same : and so in all such cases.

It seems a kind of Injustice, to correct one, that is sick, if she cannot help it, as one that is well, and hath the use of Reason : the same would it be, to bind Mad-Folks, and beat them : what must be done then ? Let them kill all, they meet ? Let them believe me, for I have tried it, and (according to my skill) used many Remedies, yet have found no other : and the Prioress, that out of pity suffers such as these, to begin to take liberty, in the end will not be able to endure them ; and, when she would remedy it, they will have done others a great deal of hurt. And, if Mad-men are bound, and corrected, to the end they may not kill ; and it is well, and a work of Charity, and Piety, (seeing they cannot help it) how much more ought care to be taken, that these do no harm to Souls with their Liberty ? And I verily

ly believe, that many times (as I have said) it proceeds from a disposition affecting Liberty, wanting Humility, and Unsubdued ; and that that humour doth them not so much mischief, as this Inclination : I say, *in some Persons* ; for I have seen, that, when there is one, of whom thefe stand in aw, they keep within bounds, and have Ability enough for it : why then can they not do so for God ? I am afraid, the Devil, under the colour of this Humour, desires to gain many Souls : for, it is more in fashion now, than was wont ; and the reason is, because all Self-will is stiled *Melancholy*. Whereupon I have had some thought, that in all the *Monasteries* of our *Order* they should never take this name into their mouths, because it implies in it Liberty ; but that it should be stiled *the Great Infirmary* (and how great a one is it !) and that care be taken of it, as such ; and that at certain times it is very necessary to attenuate the humour by some Physick, that so it may be more tollerable, and that she be treated in the *Infirmary* ; and know, that when she shall come forth thence to confort with the *Community*, she must be obedient, and humble, as well as any of the rest ; and, whenever she doth not so, that that humour shall not excuse her ; since, for the reasons, I have alledged, and others, that might be mentioned, this is expedient.

But it is likewise necessary, that the *Priores* (without the infirm person's knowing thereof) carry her self with great tenderness toward them, after the manner of a natural mother, and seek out all the means, she can, for their Cure. I seem to contradict my self ; for hitherto I have said, that they are to guide them with rigour ; and so I say again, the *Priresses* must carry themselves toward them so, that the infirm persons may understand, that they shall never prevaile for doing their own will, but that they are to stand within their bounds, and obey ; for, in the knowing that they have this Liberty, consists their ruine. But yet the *Priores* may do well, not to enjoyn them that, wherein she sees, they are like to make resistance, in regard they have not the power to enforce themselves ; but manage them with Gentleness, and Love in all, that shall be needful, that so (if possible) they may submit out of Love, which would be far better ; and sometimes it is effective to discover that she affectionately loves them, letting them see it both by deeds, and words. They must observe, that the best remedy, they have, is, to employ them much in businels, and exterior Exercises, that they may not have time, nor leisure to go fancying things with their Imagination ; for herein lies all their mischief : and, though fometimes they do not perform such Offices so very well, let them bear with some defects of theirs, that they bear not with greater afterward, when they are undone ; because I know, the most Sovereign remedy that

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can be applied to them is, to take care, that they make not too long Prayer, nay, to diminish the ordinary ; because they have for the most part a weak Imagination, and it will do them much harm, besides that they will conceit things, which neither themselves, nor he that hearkens to them, shall ever make any sense of. Let care be taken, that they eat *Fish*, but seldom, and be not enjoyed Fasting continually, as the others are. It may seem superfluous to give such strict directions about this evil, and about no other, there being so many, and so grievous in this our miserable life, especially in the weakness incident to Women : but I do it for two Reasons ; the first is, For that they think themselves well, because they will not understand that they have such a Malady ; and, since they force them to keep their Bed, though they have no Fever, nor no Physician is sent for, the *Priores*, here, must take care to be the *Physician* ; for it is a Disease more prejudicial to all Perfection, than their's, who, out of danger of their lives, keep their Bed. The second is, because, in other Sickneses, either they recover, or dye ; Of this 'tis a wonder, if they recover ; nor do they dye of it except thus, that they come utterly to lose their judgment, and that this may be called a *death*, which also kills all about them : they suffer in themselves indeed a painful death of Afflictions, Imaginations, and scruples (so that they will have occasion enough of meriting) though they call these still *Temptations* rather) for if they once could throughly understand, that these proceeded from this their Malady, they would find a great ease to themselves in making but little account thereof. Indeed I have great compassion on them, as likewise all others ought to compassionate them ; those, I mean, that live with them, both in considering, that our *Lord* might have laid upon them also this Malady, and in bearing much with them ; yet so, as they may not perceive it, as I have said. Our *Lord* grant, that I may have said any thing right, that may conduce to the cure of so great an *Infirmitie*.

CHAP. XIII.

Some Directions are laid down about Revelations, and Visions.

IT seems, that to some Persons the only hearing of *Visions*, or *Revelations* named, causeth a horrour ; but I understand not, why they should account it a thing so very dangerous, for God to lead a Soul this way, nor whence this wonderment proceeds. I will not at present discourse, which are good, which bad ; nor tell the Signes, I have heard from very Learned

ed Persons, for the discerning thereof; but I will speak of that, which it will be fit for him to do, who shall see himself in this condition; for, such as these will light on few *Confessors*, that will not put them in fear. For, indeed their telling these, how the Devil represents to them many kinds of Spiritual Blasphemies, and Impertinencies, and Dishonesties, doth not so much trouble them, as it scandalizeth them to hear any say, they have seen, or heard an *Angel* speaking to them; or that our *Lord Jesus Christ* Crucified appeared to them.

Nor will I discourse here, * when *Revelations* are from God, since this is known already from the great benefits, they work in the Soul; but, * of those Representations, which the Devil makes, to delude us, counterfeiting the Image of our *Lord Christ*, or his *Saints*. I believe, for my part, that our Lord will not permit, nor give him the Power, to be able to deceive any one with such kind of Figures, except it be by their own Fault; nay rather, he shall be deceived himself; and so there is no cause of being suspicious, and fearful, but to trust in God, and make light account of these things, unless it be for them the more to praise Him.

I know a Person, who for such things was by her *Confessors* kept in great Torment; and afterward (by what could be discovered from the extraordinary effects, and good Fruits, that followed thereupon) it was evident, that it was God; and she had much ado, when she saw his *Image*, in any Vision, to cross her self, or use it contemptuously, and slight it; for so she was commanded. Afterward she treating about it with *Father Dominicus Bannez*, a *Licentiate*, a man of great Learning, he said, it was ill done; and that none should do so; for, where-ever we see the Picture of our Lord, it is good to reverence it, although made by the Devil, for that he is a skilful Painter; and that, whilst he intends us mischief, he benefits us rather, if he draw us a *Crucifix*, or any other Image so to the Life, as to leave it Engraven in our hearts. This reason fitted me well; for, when we see a very handsome, and curious Picture, though we know a most wicked Person drew it, we would not therefore undervalue it, nor so heed the Workman, as to quit our Devotion; for, the good, or evil consists not in the Apparition, but in him, that sees it, and doth not thereby advance in Humility; for, if this be there, it can do no harm, though it be from the Devil; and, if not there, though it be from God, it will do no good: for, if that, which should serve to humble the Soul, (by seeing, that it merits not such grace,) doth inflate it, it will be like the Spider, which converts all, it eats, into Poison, and not like the Bee, that turns it into Honey. I would fain explain my self better: If

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our Lord, of his goodness, would represent himself to a Soul, to the end she might both know, and love him more; and would discover some Secret to her; or do her some particular Favours, and grace, and she should hereupon, from what might serve to confound her, and make her know, how little her meanness, and baseness deserves it, take her self presently for a Saint, and imagine, that this Favour befall her for some Service, she had done; it is evident, that the great good, which might have come of it, is turned, as by a *Spider*, into evil. Now, suppose we, at present, that the Devil causeth these Apparitions, to excite one to pride, yet if the Soul at the same time (thinking them to be of God) humbleth her self, and believes her self no way deserving so great a Favour, and forces her self to serve him better: If thus seeing her rich, and yet that she deserves not to eat the Crumbs that fall from the Tables of those Persons, on whom she hath heard, God bestows such Favours (that is, unworthy to be a Servant to any one of them) she humbles her self, and courageously begins to inforce her self to do Penance, to give her self more to Prayer, and to take more care not to offend this Lord, by whom she conceives this Favour done her, and to obey in greater Perfection, I dare warrant you, the Devil will not return, but go away confounded, and ashamed, and leave no hurt in such a Soul. When he bids her do some things, or reveales others to come, here she must communicate all to a discreet, and Learned *Confessor*, not doing, nor believing any thing, but just what he shall say to her. She may likewise make the *Priore's* acquainted therewith, to the end she may assign her a *Confessor* thus qualified: and let her take this for a Rule; that, if she will not observe what the *Confessor* bids her, nor let him guide her, it is either some evil Spirit, or a terrible Melancholy. For, supposing, that the *Confessor* should mistake; yet, in not departing from his directions, she shall proceed more securely, although it were an Angel of our Lord that spake to her: for our Lord will give her light, or otherwise dispose, how that shall be fulfilled, which was said, and revealed to her; and, to do thus, is without danger; but, in doing otherwise: may be much Peril, and many Inconveniences.

We are to consider, that natural Infirmitie, in Women especially, is very great, and more evidently discovers it self in this way of Prayer; so that it is necessary, that we do not presently mistake every petty matter, that we conceit, or is presented to our Fancies, for a *Vision*; for, let them believe me, when it is a *Vision* indeed, it will sufficiently manifest it self. Where there is a little Melancholy, more vigilance herein is requisite; for, some have come to me upon occasion of these Fancies, who have made me astonished, how it is possible, that some should so really think they see that,

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which they see not. There came one time to speak with me a *Confessor* greatly wondering, who confessed a certain person, that told him, she was often visited by our *B. Lady*; and that, sitting down upon her Bed, she staid above an hour discoursing with her, and telling her things to come, and many such matters: Among so many Impertinencies it fell out, that some came to pass, and hereupon all the rest was held as certain. I soon knew, what it was; though I durst not say so, because we live in a World, wherein we ought to consider, what others may think of us, to the end our words may take more effect: and so I bad him wait, and see, if those Predictions proved true; and enquire of her concerning certain other effects; and inform himself concerning the life of the party: in fine, when these things came to be discovered, it was found to be all foolery.

I could say so much upon this subject, as would suffice to prove what I intend, to wit, that the Soul be not so light of belief, but very seriously consider, ripening all with time, and that it deliberate, and throughly understand first, before she communicate it, and conferr about it, to the end she deceive not the *Confessor*, not purposing to deceive him: because, if the *Confessor* have not experience of these things, though he be Learned, he will not be able to know, and understand them. It is not many years since, but very lately, that a certain man grossly abused some, both Learned, and Spiritual, Persons, in things of this nature, till he came to deal with one, that had this experience of these Divine Favours, who saw evidently, that it was Folly, and Illusion; though at present this party was not discovered for such; but continued so, Disguised, and Unknown: A little after, our Lord manifestly detected him, although that person, that knew this thing, had before that suffered much, because she was not believed.

For these, and other such like reasons, it is very fit, that each of the *Sisters* shoud with all Freedome, and Clarity, treat with the *Priores*s about her Prayer; and let *Her* have a great care to observe the Complexion and Perfection of such *Sister*, that she may acquaint the *Confessor* therewith, to the end he may the better understand her: and let her make choice of one for her turne, if the ordinary *Confessor* be not skilled in such things. Let her be very careful, that things of this nature be not Communicated (though they be never so much of God, and Favours apparently miraculous) to Persons abroad; nor yet to *Confessors*, who have not the discretion of keeping silence; for, it imports more, than they imagine; and that they do not talk, nor discourse thereof with one another. Let the *Priores*s always with Prudence hearken to them,

inclining still more to commend those, that advance furthest in matters of Humility, Mortification, and Obedience, than those, whom God shall lead by this way of highly-supernatural *Prayer*, although they have all these other vertues. For, if it be the *Spirit* of God, it carries Humility along with it, delighting in being undervalued, and so this will not prejudice her, and will profit others : for, since they cannot attain to this (God bestowing it on whom he pleases) they will grieve, and afflict themselves for it, since they also have these other vertues ; although even those also God gives ; but yet they may be procured by our endeavours, and are of great value for a *Religious State*. His Divine Majesty bestow these on us ; since, upon Exercise in them, Diligence, and Prayer, he will deny these to none, who, relying on his Mercy, shall endeavour after them.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery of Malagon.

How exceedingly have I digressed from what I intended ! But, it may be, some of these advices, I have given, may prove more to the purpose, than a Narration concerning the Foundations. Being now at *S. Joseph's of Medina del Campo*, I took great delight to see, that these *Sisters* walked in the same steps, as those of *S. Josephs of Avila*, and with every-way the like Religious Observance, Unity, and Spirit : and that our Lord went providing his *House* of what was necessary, both for the *Church*, and for the *Nuns* ; which was by the coming in of some, whom it seemed our Lord himself made choice of, as well fitting for the Foundation of such a Fabrick ; and I sufficiently knew, that on these good beginnings depended, and consisted all that good, that was to follow ; since those, that come after, go the way, which they find marked-out, and beaten by the first.

There dwelt in *Toledo* a certain Lady, called *Donna Aloysia della Cerdas*, Sister to the Duke of *Medina Celi*, in whose house by my *Superior's* command I lived a while, as I have more at large related in the Foundation of *S. Joseph of Avila*. This Lady, understanding that I had a Licence for Erecting *Monasteries*, began exceedingly to importune me to Found one in a Town of hers, called *Malagon*. I would by no means admit thereof, in regard the place was so little, that of necessity it must have

have *Rent* settled on it, to be able to maintain it self; a thing, which I was extreamly averse from. Consulting about it with some Learned men, and with [Dominicus Banne] Ja Confessor of mine, they told me, I had done ill; because since the *Holy Council of Trent* permitted Rents to be taken, there was no just ground of refusing the Erecting a *Monastery* (wherein our Lord might so much be served) for enjoying my own opinion, or particular content. Hereto were added the many Intreaties, and Importunities of this *Lady*, so that I could do no less, than admit the *Monastery*. She gave a sufficient Revenue; for I was ever of opinion, and liked best, that our *Houses* should either be altogether Poor, or have a Revenue so great, as that the *Nuns* might not be necessitated to trouble any for what they need.

All possible diligence was used, that no one in particular should possess any thing, but that they observe the *Constitutions* in all points, as in those other *Monasteries* Founded in Poverty. All the Writings being drawn, I sent for some of the *Nuns* to Erect the Foundation; and they being come, we with that *Lady* went to *Malagon*, where, at prelent, the house was not fitted to receive us: whereupon we lodged above eight days in an appertiment of the *Castle*.

On *Palm-Sunday* in the Year 1568. all the people of the place went in *Procession* for us, and putting our Veils over our Faces, and white Mantles on, we came to the Town-Church, where we heard *Mas*, and a *Sermon*; and passing thence in the same *Procession* with the most *Holy Sacrament* we arrive at our *Monastery*, and the *Church*, where with great solemnity it was set up: which excited much Devotion in all the people, and here I tarried some days. One day about this time after I had Communicated, being in *Prayer*, I understood by Revelation from our Lord, that He was to be greatly served in that *Monastery*. I think I continued there about two Months only; for my Spirit hastened me to be gone for Founding the *Monastery* of *Valladolid*; the reason whereof I will now relate.

CHAP. XV.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery of Valladolid.

Four, or five Months before the *Monastery of S. Joseph* was Founded in *Malagon*, a Young Gentleman of quality discoursing with me, told me, that, if I would Erect a *Monastery* in *Valladolid*, he would very willingly, for this purpose, bestow on me a *House*, he had there, with a very fair, and spacious *Garden* adjoining, which had in it a large *Vineyard*: and he would give me Possession thereof presently, though it were of a great value. I accepted it, though I was not absolutely resolved to Found the *Monastery* there, in regard the place given was about a Mile distant from the City: but, methought, that, Possession being once taken, it would be an easie matter afterward to go to the City: and, since the *Donor* likewise did it so freely, I would not refuse to accept so pious a Work, nor give a check to his Devotion. About two Months after He was taken with a Disease so sudden, and violent, that it deprived him of his Speech, and he could not well make his Confession, though he shewed many Signs of Contrition. He died in a very short time, at a great distance from the place, where I was. Our Lord told me; *that very happily he was in a state of Salvation*; *that he had Mercy on him for the Service done to his B. Mother*, in bestowing that *House* to be made a *Monastery* of her *Order*; *and that his Soul should not pass out of Purgatory*, till the first Mass were said there; *and that then it should straight ascend into Glory*. The excessive Torments, that this Soul endured, were so continually present to me, that, though I desired to Erect a *House* in *Toledo*, I forbore as yet, and made all the hast, I could, to Found (as well as I could) that at *Valladolid*.

It could not be dispatched so soon, as I desired, because I was forced to stay divers days at *S. Joseph's of Avila*, which was under my charge; and afterward it being meet, I should pass through *Medina del Campo*, I was to continue some days longer in that *House* of *S. Joseph's*. Being there one day in *Prayer*, our Lord bad me; *make hast, because that Soul suffered greatly*; whereupon, though not well prepared, I would needs be gone, and on *S. Laurence's* day entred *Valladolid*. But, when I saw the *House*, methought the whole world lay upon me by reason of the great Affliction, I felt; for, I knew it was ridiculous to think, the *Nuns* could dwell their without excessive charge; and, though it were very

very convenient for Recreation, there being a fair & pleasant Garden, yet could it not chuse but be unwholsome, because the River ran by it. Although I was very weary, yet it was meet I should go to the *Mas*, in a Church of our Order, that stood in the entrance to the City, and it was such a way off, that this redoubled my pain; yet I said nothing of it to my Companions, lest I should discourage them; for I had always a Faith (though a weak one) that our Lord, who had told me what I have before related, would provide some remedy. So very privately I got Work-men together, and made them begin the Walls, to the end it might have such Clasure, as was fitting; and to do whatever else was necessary. There was with us the Priest, I mentioned, called *Julian d' Avila*, and Father *John della Croce*, one of those two Religious, who (as I said) would become *Discalceate*; and him I continually informed, and acquainted with the manner of Life that is observed in these Monasteries: and *Julian d' Avila* was employed about getting a Licence from the *Ordinary*, who had given good hopes thereof, before I went thither. This Licence could not be procured till a *Sunday* came, but the *Vicar* gave us one for the saying *Mas* in the place which we had designed for a *Church*: and hereupon it was said. I was far from thinking, that then should be fulfilled that, which had been spoken to me about that Soul, because, though it was revealed to me, that it should fall out upon the first *Mas*, yet I conceived, it was meant of that, wherein the most *Holy Sacrement* shuld be set up,

As soon as the *Priest* came where we were to Communicate, with the *B. Sacrament* in his hands, as I approached to receive it, I saw by the fide of the *Priest*, that *Gentleman*, I speake of, standing before me, with a resplendent, and chearful Countenance, and with his hands joynd together, thanking me exceedingly for that, which I had done for him, to the freeing him out of *Purgatory*: after which his Soul went immediately to *Heaven*. Indeed, when I understood of his being in a state of *Salvation*, and in the way to *Heaven*, I was very glad, because, as soon as ever I knew of his Death, and the suddeness thereof, I was in a manner hopeless and extream sad, fearing lest that Soul were damned; it seeming to me, that another kind of death was necessary for his course of Life; for, although he had some good qualities, yet he remained inumersed in the things of the World: it is true, he told my Companions, that he counted his death very near. A strange thing, how pleasing to our *Lord* any kind of Service is, that is done to his *Mother*; great is his mercy. Praised, and blessed be He, who thus rewards with Glory, and life Eternal, the meanness of our works, and renders them great, which of themselves are of so poor a value.

The day of our *Lady's Assumption* being come, being on the 15th. of *August*, in the Year 1568. possession of this *Monastery* was taken. We continued there but a while, because we fell all extream ill. Which the *Lady*

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Domina

Donna Maria de Mendoza, Wife to the Gouvernour Cobos, and Mother to the Marques of Camarasa seeing one very devout, and exceeding charitable (as the abundant Alms bestowed by her do witness) of whom formerly also I had received much charity, and courtesie, and she being the Bishop of Avila's Sister had treated much with her about erecting of that first Monastery; at which time she then shewed her self very friendly to us, as likewise at present she doth, in all that concerns the good of our Order. This virtuous Lady being so very Charitable, and seeing that there was no living here without great inconvenience, both for the remotenes, and difficulty of receiving Alms, and for that it was an unhealthy place, in regard of the bad Air, she bade us give her that House, and she in stead thereof would purchase a better for us; and so she did: for, that she gave us, was worth a great deal more; besides that to this day she hath furnished us with all necessaries, and will continue it to us as long as she lives.

On St. Blasius's day we went to this other House with a solemn Procession, and great devotion of the people, which continues still; for our Lord shews great mercy to that Monastery, bringing thither persons, whose Sanctity in it's due time will be recorded to the glory, and praise of our Lord, who by such means is pleased to aggrandize his works, and conferr Favours on his Creatures. Amen.

Now, in regard there was admitted here one, who being very yong sufficiently shewed she understood what the World is, by despising it, I have thought fit here to relate it, that those who much love it may be shamed, and such yong Virgins, on whom our Lord bestows good desires, and inspirations, may have an example for the putting them in execution.

There lives in this Town a Lady called *Donna Maria de Acunya*, Sister to the Count of Buendia, and married to the Gouvernour of Castile. He dying, She was left with a Son, and two Daughters, and another very yong. She began to lead a life of so great sanctity, and to educate her Children in so much Vertue, that she merited that God might desire them for himself. I said not well; that she had three Daughters left her: for, one became presently a Nun; Another would not marry, but led a life of great edification with her Mother. The Son very yong began to understand what the World was; and God to call him to enter into Religion, in such sort that nothing was able to hinder him; at which the Mother so rejoiced, that she must needs assist him much with our Lord, though she discovered it not to her Kindred. In fine, when our Lord would have a Soul to himself, the Creatures have little strength to hinder it. So it fell out here: for, notwithstanding their detaining him by much perswasion three years, he entred into the Society of Jesse. A Confessor of this Lady's told me, that she said to him, that never in all her Life any joy went so near her heart, as that day that her Son made his

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Profession. O Lord ! What great favours do you do to those on whom you bestow such Parents ! for, these so really love their Children, that they desire they should enjoy their estates, inheritances, and riches in that Bliss which is to have no end. A thing to be much pitied, that the World is yet in so great unhappiness and blindness, that Parents conceive their honour consists in preserving the Memory of the Dunghil of these Worldly Estates, and yet never remember how late, or how soon, they are to end : whereas all that which hath an end, though it continues a while, yet is not far from it ; and there is reason to make little account thereof ; and that at their poor Children's costs they seek to prolong their vanities, and with huge presumption rob God of the Souls which he would have for himself, and them too, of so great a good ; for, though they missed of that which is to last for ever, it is an exceeding great one to see themselves freed of the tediousnesses, and laws of the World, and these greater still to those that possess more in it. Open, my God, their eyes, give them to understand what that love is, which they are bound to bear to their Children ; that they do them not so great a mischief, and these may not complain of them before God in that Last Judgment, where, though unwilling, they shall understand the true value of every thing.

Now, God of his mercy having taken out of a secular life this Gentleman, the Son of this *Lady Donna Maria de Acunya*, (who was called *Don Antonio de Padilla*) at the age of Seventeen Years , or thereabout, the Estate fell to the eldest Daughter, called *Donna Luisa de Padilla*, because the Countess of Buendia had no children, and *Don Antonio* was Heire both to the Earldome, and the being Governor of Castile. Because it is not to my purpose, I mention not how much he suffered from his Kindred, till he effected his designe : he will best understand it that knows how highly those of the World value the having a Successour to their Families. O Son of the Eternal Father, Jesus Christ our Lord, true King of all, what did not you leave, in the World for us to be able to inherit as being descended from you ? What possessed you, my Lord, but labours, griefs, and disgraces, nay you had nothing but a Tree whereon to suffer a painful languishment of Death. In fine, my God, it becomes not us, who desire to be your true Children, and not to disclaime our inheritance, to fly such suffering. Your Arms are Five Wounds. This, then, my Daughters, is to be our Device, if we would inherit his Kingdome. Not with ease, not with delights, not with honours, not with riches is that to be acquired which he purchased with so much blood. O illustrious Families ! For the love of God open your eyes ; consider the true Cavaliers of Jesus Christ, and the Princes of his Church, St. Peter and St. Paul took not the course that ye take. Think ye haply, that there is to be a new way for you ? Never believe it. Behold how God begins to discover it to Persons

sons of so tender an age, as their's whom we now speak of. I have some times seen and talked with this *Don Antonio*; he loved only the having much, that he might quit it all. O blessed YOUTH, and blessed MAID, that merited so exceedingly with *God*, that at the age wherein the World useth to predominate in its Lovers, these should contemne it. Blessed be *He* that did them so high a favour.

Now, the Estate falling to the elder Sister, she valued it just as did her Brother: for, from her childhood she had so addicted herself to *Prayer*, (the thing whereby *God* gives light for the understanding truths) that she esteemed it as little, as her Brother had done. Good God! In what troubles, torments, and lucts, yea even to the hazarding their lives, and honours, do many engage themselves to heire such an inheritance! And they must suffer not a few also to obtain leave to quit it. Such is this World, that it sufficiently discovers to us its fooleries, were we not blind. Very willingly, that she might be exempt from inheriting, she resigned it also to her youngest Sister; for now there was no other; who was about Ten or Eleven Years old. Immediately, that they might preserve the Memory of the Family, the Kindred appointed to marry this Girle to an *Uncle* of her's, her Father's Brother; and getting a Dispensation from the *Pope* they contracted them.

Our *Lord* was not pleased that the *Daughter* of such a *Mother*, and the *Sister* of such worthy Persons should continue more deluded, than were they; and so followed this which I will now relate. The Girle beginning to relish the modes and bravery of the World (for, considering her quality, they might easily inveigle one so yong as she was) not full two months passed after the Espousalls, when *God* began to give her light, though she then perceived it not. When she had spent a day in variety of pleasure with her Spouse (who carefled her extraordinarily, as far as her age permitted) it caused a very great sadness in her to see that that day was ended; and that so all the rest must end. O the Greatness of *God*! For, from the very satisfaction which the delight of things perishing afforded her she came to abhor them. It began to affect her with so great a sadness, that she could not conceale it from her Spouse; nor did she well know for what it was; nor what to say to him, though he asked her. About this time fell out a journy which he could not refuse to go, and far off, which she resented much, loving him so dearly. But presently our *Lord* discovered to her the cause of her trouble, which was that her Soul inclined towards that which is to have no end, and she began to consider, how her Sisters had taken the securer course, and left her in the perils of the World. On one side this troubled her, on the other, that she thought she had no remedy; for, she understood not, that being espoused she might be a *Nun*, till she asked it. She lived a sad life; and above all the Love she bare to her Spouse permitted her not to resolve, and so die

she went about in great pain. But, our Lord desiring her for himself, she went on winning in this love, & increasing in her desire of quitting all. At this time the only thing that moved her was a desire of being saved, and of seeking the best means thereof; for, she imagined that engaging any further in matters of the World she might forget the securing what is Eternall: since in so tender an age God had infused into her this wisdome of seeking how to gain that which never ends. Happy Soul, who so quickly got out of that blindness, wherein many aged finish their days! When she now saw her Will free, she determined wholly to bestow herself on God, (which hitherto she had concealed); and she began to treat hereof with her Sister. She, thinking it a fancy disswaded her from it, and spake certain things to this purpose, that she might very well be saved being married. She answered her, [by asking,] Why she then had left it? Thus some days passed, wherein her desire went on always increasing, though she durst say nothing to her Mother; who peradventure was she that raised this War by her holy Prayers.

CHAP. XV. She prosecutes the former discourse, concerning the course Donna Casilda de Padilla took to obtain her holy desires of entring into Religion.

AT this time fell out the giving the Habit to a Nun in this Monastery of the Conception, whose Call may hereafter be mentioned, for though these two much differ in quality, since the one is a poor Country - Maid, yet in the great favours God doth her he conducts her after such a manner, that the preserving her Memory may be a means of praising his Majesty: now, *Donna Casilda* (for so was this Beloved of God called) going to the giving of this Habit with a Grand-mother of her's, who was *Mother* to her *Spouse*, she became extremely affected to this Monastery, conceiving that, by being few, and poor, they might serve God better, though notwithstanding she was not altogether determined to quit her *Spouse*; which, as I said, was that which most retarded her. She considered that, before she was espoused, she was wont to keep set times of *Prayer*: for, the piety and devotion of their *Mother* kept them and their children educated herein; who from seven years old made them at certain times go into an *Oratory*, and taught them how they might meditate on our *Lord's Passion*, and made them confess often; and therefore she hath seen so good success of her desires, which were to love them for *God*; and so she hath told me, that she always presented them to him, and besought him to draw them out of the World; for she was already undeceived, as to the little it ought to be esteemed. I consider sometimes, when they see themselves possessed of the eternal joys, and that their *Mother* was a means thereof, what thanks they will give her, and the accessional joy she will take in beholding them: and how on the contrary those, who by their Parents.

Parents are not educated as the Children of God (for, his they are, more than their own) behold one the other in Hell; the execrations they utter, and despair they feel.

Now, returning to what I was saying, when she saw that even as to the saying the *Rosary* she did it unwillingly, she had a great fear that she should be always worse, and she conceived she saw evidently, that by coming to this *House* she might secure her salvation: so she absolutely resolved upon it; and, her *Sister* and she with her *Mother* coming one morning hither, it happened that they went into the *Monastery*, without any thought that she would do what she did. As soon as she saw herself within it, none was able to get her out of the *House*: her tears were so many, that they would let her alone, and the expressions she used, that she made them all astonished. Her *Mother*, though inwardly glad thereof, feared the *Kindred*, and desired not that she should continue there in this manner, lest they should say she had persuaded her, and the *Prioress* was also of the same opinion; for she thought her too young, and that there needed further trial. This was in the morning, and they were to stay there till the evening; so they sent to call her *Confessor*, and *Father Fr. Domingo*, who was mine, that *Dominic* whom I mentioned at the beginning; though I was not then there. This *Father* understood presently that it was the *Spirit of God*, and assisted her much, and suffered greatly from her kindred; So must all those do who pretend to serve him when they see a Soul called by God, not regard humane prudences. He promised to aid her, that so she might return another day. With much persuasion, that they might not lay the blame upon her *Mother*, she went away this time, but proceeded always advancing further in her desires. Her *Mother* began privately to be a means to her kindred, that her *Spouse* might not hear thereof, to carry the matter secretly. They said, it was childishnes, and that it was fit to stay till she was of age; for she was not full twelve years old. She said, Since they found her of age to marry, and put her into the *World*, how was she not so to give herself to God? She uttered such things as sufficiently shewed it was not she that spake therein. It could not be kept so private, but that her *Spouse* had notice of it; which when she understood, she thought it was not reasonable to tarry for him: and one day of the *Feast of the Conception* being at her *Grand-mother's* house, who was likewise her *Mother-in-Law*, who knew nothing thereof, she earnestly requested her to let her go into the fields with her *Governess* to recreate herself a little, she, to pleasure her, did so, in a Coach with her Servants. She gave one of them mony, and requested him to tarry for her at the Gate of the *Monastery* with a bundle of vine-branches; and she made them fetch such a compass that they brought her by that *House*: when she came to the gate, she bade them ask at the *Wheel* for a pot of Water, but not say for whom, and so alighted in haste; they said, they could give

give her some Water there, but she would not. By this her bundle was come thither; so she spoke to bid them come to the gate to take in the bundle, herself standing close by, and so in their opening it she entred in, and went to embrace our *Lady*, weeping, and beseeching the *Priores* not to put her out. The cries of the Servants were great, and the knocks they gave at the Gate; she went to speak to them at the Grate, and told them she would by no means come forth; bidding them go tell her *Mother*: the Women also that came with her made great lamentations. She little heeded all this. When they told her *Grand-mother* the news, she desired to go thither immedately. In fine, neither she, nor her *Uncle*, nor her *Spouse*, who being come home endeavoured much to speak with her at the Grate, did any thing but only torment her, when they were with her, and afterward leave her with a greater resolution. Her *Spouse* told her, after many laments, that she might serve *God* more by Alms-deeds: whereto she answered him, He might do them. And to other things she told him. She was most obliged to secure her own salvation; and that she saw she was weak, and could not be saved in the temptations of the World; that he had no cause to complain of her, since she had not left him but only for *God*; and herein she had done him no wrong. When she perceived he was satisfied with nothing, she rose, and left him. He made no impression on her, rather she was altogether disquieted at him; for, the temptations and impediments which the Devil casts before a Soul, on whom God bestows the light of the truth, help her rather; because his *Majesty* is he that fights for her; and so it is evidently seen here that it was not she that spake. When her *Spouse* and Kindred saw how little the seeking to get her out thence willingly availed, they procured it by force, and so got a Royal Mandate to take her forth of the *Monastery*, and set her at liberty. All this time, which was from the *Conception* to the day of the *Holy Innocents*, when they took her out, she continued without having the *Habit* given her in the *Monastery*, doing all the services of the *Order*, as if she had taken it, and that with very great delight. That day they carried her to a Gentleman's house, the Magistrates coming for her: they conducted her with many tears saying, Why did they torment her, since it availed nothing? Here she was much urged both by Religious Persons, and others: for, some thought her too yong; others desired she should enjoy her Estate. It would be too long for me to tell the disputos she had, and the manner whereby she freed hersell from them all. She left them amazed at the things she spake. So, when they saw she was not wrought upon, they placed her in her *Mother's* house, to protract the time a while, who was ready tired to see so much stir, yet she assid her in nothing; nay, in outward appearance was against her. It may be it was the more to try her; at least so she hath told me since, who is so holy, that nothing is to be believed, contrary to what she faith. But the Girle underflood it not;

and

and a *Confessor* also that confessed her was extremely against her; so that she had none, save God, and a Maid of her Mother's to repose in. So She passed on with great trouble and affliction, till she was full twelve years old; when she understood that they consulted about conducting her to the *Monastery* where her Sister was, to be a *Nun* there, (since they could not dissuade her from being one) because there was not practised in it so great austerity. When she perceived this, she determined to procure by any means she could to carry on her former design: and so one day, going to *Mass* with her Mother, being in the *Church*, her Mother went into a *Confessional* to confess, and she asked her *Governess*, to go to one of the *Fathers* to desire him to say a *Mass* for her; whom when she saw gone, she put her Chapines in her sleeve, and lifting up her long coats went as fast as she could to this *Monastery*, which was a good distance off. Her *Governess* not finding her went after her, and, when she had gone about prayed a Man to look for her (who said afterward, he was not able to move) and so left her. She, as soon as she had entered the first gate of the *Monastery*, and shut it, and called out to them, when her *Governess* came, was already within the *Monastery*, and they presently gave her the *Habit*; & so she put an end to those good beginnings, which God had infused into her. His *Majesty* began presently in a very short space to recompence with spiritual favours, and she to serve him with very great content, and very great humility, and dis-engagement from every thing. Be He blessed for ever, who gives such a relish in poor clothes and sackcloth to her that was so addicted to very curious and costly ones; yet are they no means of hiding her beauty; for, these natural graces God hath bestowed on her, as well as the spiritual, of a disposition, and understanding so agreeable, as even excites them all to praise his *Majesty*. He grant, there may be many so well corresponding to their Call.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Life, and Death of a Nun, named Beatrice of the Incarnation, whom our Lord called to this Monastery.

THERE was admitted for a *Nun* into this *Monastery* a yong *Damosel* called *Dona Beatrice Ognez*, somewhat akin to *Donna Casilda*: She entred the House some years before, whose Soul made all astonished to see what our Lord wrought in her, adorning her with eminent Vertues. For, the *Nuns*, and the *Prioress* affirm, that all the time she lived amongst them they never discerned in her any thing, that could be judged an Imperfection; nor ever observed her, for whatsoever accident, alter her looks

looks ; but always carrying a modest Clearfulness, an evident argument of that inward Joy, her Soul possessed. A silence without heaviness, or offensiveness ; for, her taciturnity was such, as could not be taxed of singularity. It was never known, that she spake a word that had any thing in it to be reprehended ; nothing of obstinacy was seen in her, nor did she at any time excuse her self, though the *Priores*, to try her, blamed her for that, which she had not done ; as in these Monasteries is wont, to mortifie them thereby. She never complained of any thing, nor of any of the *Sisters* ; nor, either by word, or look did she ever displease any one, in whatever businesse she was employed. She never gave occasion of suspicion of any Imperfection in her ; nor was there any accusation against her in the *Chapter* concerning the least defect ; although the smalles, and most minute matters are by the *Zelatore* observed, and mentioned there. In all things the Composure of her Interior, and Exterior was admirable : This proceeded from a strong apprehension, she had of *Eternity*, and the End, for which *God* made us. Nothing came out of her mouth, but the Praises of *God*, and highest expressions of gratitude : in short, her life was one continued Prayer. In point of *Obedience* she committed not the least defect, but with great promptnes, perfection, and alacrity observed whatever was enjoyned her. She had a most ardent Charity to her Neighbour, in such sort that she often said, she could be content for any one of them to be cut in a thousand pieces, that they might not lose their Souls, but enjoy her dear *Brother Jesus Christ* ; for so she called our *Lord*, in the midst of the Afflictions of her most terrible sicknesses, and tormenting pains (as I shall afterward relate) which she endured so willingly, and so contentedly, as if they had been the greatest delights, and regalos : which certainly our *Lord* did communicate in Spirit to her, it being otherwise impossible for her to bear them with that chearfulness, as she did.

It fell out once that here in this City of *Valladolid* they led some to Execution, to be burnt for some enormous Crimes ; She, coming to understand, that they went not so well prepared, and fitted to dye, as became them, was thereupon so extremely Afflicted, that with great grief she repaired to our *Lord*, and besought him very earnestly for the Salvation of those Souls ; and that, in stead of what they deserved, and to the end she might obtain this request (for, the words I remember not exactly) he would give her all her life as many Miseries, and Torments, as she was able to bear. That very night her first Fever took her, and to her death she went on continually suffering : afterward it was known, that those Malefactors died very well disposed, whereby it seems, God heard her Prayer.

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Besides, she had an Impostume in her Bowels, with such excessive Pains, that, to be able with patience to endure them, she had need of all that strength, wherewith our Lord had endued her Soul. This Impostumation, it being inward, the Remedies, and Medicines, which they applied to her, helped not at all, till it pleased our Lord, that it began to break, and cast forth Corruption, and so she grew somewhat better of this Distemper. Out of this desire of suffering, which she had, she was not content with any little pain; insomuch that, hearing a Sermon one day concerning the Cross, this desire increased so, that, going thence in a great Passion of weeping, she threw her self upon her Bed, and being asked, what she ailed? she answered; that they shoud pray to God, to give her store of Sufferings, and so she should be at ease, and rest contented. She conferred Faithfully with the Prioress concerning all her Interior matters, and in this received Consolation. In all her Sicknes she never made shew of the least discontent, or dislike in the World; she did neither more nor less, but as the Infirmary would have her; though it were forbearing to drink a little Water. For Souls, that have the gift of Prayer, to desire Afflictions, and Sufferings, when they want them, is very usual; but, when they are under these Afflictions, to delight to suffer them, is not the case of many. Now, she was already so spent with Sicknes, that her life lasted but a little while; for, besides those very extreme Tortures, she had an Impostume in her throat, so that she could not swallow. There were some of the Sisters by, when she told the Prioress (as her, whose duty it then was to comfort, and encourage her to bear so grievous a Lady) that she felt no pain at all, nor would change her condition for that, of any of the Sisters, that were in perfect health. She had such an apprehension of the Presence of the Lord, for Love of whom she suffered, that, as much as she could, she dissembled, and turned away, that so they might not perceive, how very much she suffered: so that, except when her pains wrung, and assaulted her extreamly, she complained very little. It seemed to her, there was not to be found upon earth any thing worse than her self: and in every thing, as far as could be discerned, her Humanity was wonderful. Hearing any mention the Vertues of others, she was overjoyed therat; in point of Mortifications she was immoderate: by certain artifices she avoided, and with-drew her self from whatsoever was matter of Recreation; which one, that was not very expert, and narrowly observed not, did not perceive. She seemed not to live, or converse with creatures, she so undervalued all things; for, howsoever matters went, she entertained them with such a calmnes, that they always beheld her in the same temper. Insomuch as one of the Sisters said once in jest,

jest, or merriment to her, that she seemed to resemble those persons, that stand much upon their Honour ; who, though they dye for hunger, had rather endure it, than let strangers know it, or discover this their Poverty : for they could not believe, that she had no sense of some things, though very little was discerned. All her pains and service tended to such an end, as suffered her not to lose the Merit of them : whereupon the said to the Sisters : *There is no price can recompence a thing, be it never so small, that is done for the Love of God.* We should not, Sisters, so much as turne our eyes, save for this end, and to do a thing acceptable to him. She never medled in a matter that concerned her not ; and therefore she discerned no one's defects, but her own. She took such displeasure, that any good should be spoken of her, that, upon this ground, the Nuns were wary of discoursing on this subject in her presence, lest they might afflict her. She never procured to her self Consolation, either by going into the Garden, or in any other thing : for (as she sometimes said) *It was Sottishness, and Incivility, to seek an easement of those Pains, which our Lord had sent her for her delight :* And therefore she never asked any thing, but contented her self with what they gave her. She said likewise, *It would prove a Torment to her, to take content in any thing, that was not God.* But, what is most remarkable is, that, enquiring of thole of the house, I found not one, that had observed in her any thing, save what seemed to argue a Soul of eminent perfection.

Now, the time being come, wherein our Lord would take her out of this miserable Life, her pains increased, together with so many other Distempers, that (to praise our Lord, in seeing the patience, wherewith she endured them) the Sisters went often to visit her : in particular the Chaplain, who was Confessor to that Monastery, and a great Servant of God, had an earnest desire to be present at her death ; for he, using to confess her, accounted her a Saint. Our Lord was pleased to satisfie this his desire ; for, seeing she so perfectly enjoyed her Senses, though she had already received Extreme Unction, yet they called him, that, if need were, that night, he might reconcile her, and fit her to dye well. A little more than three hours before Mid-night, all the Nuns, and that Chaplain being by, about a quarter of an hour before she died, all her pains left her ; and she lift up her eyes with a very great Serenity, and a Joyfulness settled in her countenance, that seemed a kind of Splendour ; and she remained as one that looked upon an Object that much delighted him ; for the thereupon modestly smiled twice. All that were present, and the Priest himself felt such a suavity, and Spiritual Joy, as they know not otherw^ese to express, than that they thought themselves in Heaven. And with this chearfulness,

I spake of; keeping her eyes fixed toward Heaven, she expired, her countenance remaining like an Angel's; for so we may believe (suitably both to our confidence, and her life) our Lord God conducting her to Eternal Rest, in recompence of that desire, she had, to suffer much for his sake. The Chaplain affirms (as likewise he hath testified to divers Persons) that, at the time of interring the body, he smelt a very strong, and very delicious sent. The Sacrifice avers also, that the Tapers, lighted in Honour of her Funeralls, were found not to have been wasted at all. All this may well be believed from the mercy of God. When I discoursed of these things with a Confessor of hers of the Society of Jesus, who for many Years had taken her Confessions, and managed the affairs of her Soul, he said, that was no strange thing, and that he wondered not at it, as knowing, that our Lord had great communication with her. His Majesty vouchsafe to grant (my Daughters) that we may know how to serve our selves of so good company, as this of hers, and divers others, whom our Lord gives us in these Monasteries. It may be, I may hereafter say something of them, to the end those may reinforce themselves, and take courage to imitate them, who proceed with some repidity; and to the end, we may all praise our Lord, who makes his greatness shine forth so eminently in a few weak Women.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the Foundation of the first Monastery of the Discalced Carmelite Friars at Durvelo.

Before I went to this Foundation of Valladolid, I had already agreed with Father Antonio de Jesu, who was then Prior at Medina of S. Anne's, of the Order of Carmelites, and with Father John della Croce (as I said before) that they should be the first, that were admitted, if any Coven were Erected of Discalcedes of the first Rule. But, being unprovided of a House, I did continually recommend it to God: for (as I said) I was already satisfied concerning these two Fathers: because as for Father Antonio de Jesu, our Lord had sufficiently exercised him with Afflictions, which he underwent with much perfection; and it was now a year, since I first treated with him about it: and, as for Father John della Croce, no further proof needed; for, though he lived among the Fathers Calceate

Calceate of the Rule relaxed, yet he had ever led a life of great perfection, and virtue.

It pleased our Lord, having given me the principal, namely *Friers*, to begin withall, to provide the rest also. A Gentleman of *Avila*, called *Don Raphael*, with whom I had never had acquaintance, came, I know not how, (for I do not remember the manner) to understand, that I desired to Found a *Covent* of *Discalcate Friers*; whereupon he found me out, and offered me for that purpose a House he had in a *Hamlet* or Village, named *Durvelo*, that contained in it a very few households (I think, they amounted not to twenty, if I mistake not:) this dwelling served him for a *Bailife*, he had, that kept the account of his corn-rents, that were gathered in thereabout. I (though I perceived what a one it must needs be) praised our *Lord*, and thanked the Gentleman for his proffer, shewing that I did accept it. He told me, it was in the way to *Medina del Campo*, through which I was to pass to go to the *Foundation* of *Valladolid*; and, it being the direct way, I might see it: I answered him, I would, as in effect I did; for I went from *Avila* in the Month of *June* with one *Companion*, and Father *Julian d' Avila*, *Chaplain* of *S. Joseph's* in that City, who was the *Priest*, I speake of, that assisted me in their Journeys. We departed before day-break, and knew not the way, so we missed it; and, *Durvelo* being an obscure Village, there was none, that could give us sufficient direction: in this manner we travelled all that day with much trouble, because the Sun was, so extreme hot; and, when we thought, we were nigh the place, we had as far again to go. I shall never forget the weariness, and wandering up and down of that Journey. We came thither a little before night; when we entred the house, it was in such a case, that we durst not lodge there that night, by reason of the extreme nastiness there, and the great store of Reapers, for cutting down the Corn. It had a tolerable *Portal* [or Hall] two Chambers arched over head, one within the other, and above them a Garret, and a litle Kitchin: this Structure was all, that contained our *Covent*. I considered, that of the *Porrico*, or Hall, might be made a *Church*; of the Garret a *Quire*, which futed well; of the Chambers a *Dormitory*; and the Kitchin might also serve for a *Refektory*. My *Companion*, though much better than I, and a great lover of Penance, could not endure, I should think, of making a *Covent* here; and therefore said to me: *Certainly, Mother, there is no Spirit (though never so good) that is able to endure it: speak no more of it, I beseech you.*

Father Julian who came along with me, though of the same opinion with my *Companion*, when I told him my desgin, did not contradict me. We

went to pass that night in the *Church*: But, by reason of our weariness, had not the courage to watch it there.

Being come to *Medina*, presently I spoke with *Father Antonio*, and told him what had passed; and that, if he had a mind to stay there some time, he might be sure, God would soon provide for him. Methinks, I beheld it as truly present, what our Lord hath since done, and accounted then as certain (as I may so say) all that I now see; yea and a great deal more, than I have seen: since yet at the time I am writing this, there are found Erected through the bounty of our Lord, no less than Ten *Covvents* of *Discalceates*. I told him also, that he might assure himself, that neither the past, nor present, *Provincial* would give us their Licence (for, as I said at the beginning, their consent was necessary) if they saw us in a large, and commodious House. Besides, that we had no remedy for this; and that, living in such a pretty Village, and Cottage, they would not heed us. Our Lord had given him greater courage, than me; for, he replied, *He would dwell not only there, but even in a Hog-stie*. Father *John della Croce* was of the same mind too. We wanted at present the consent of the two *Fathers Provincial*, I spake of; for, upon this condition *Father General* granted the Licence: I had great confidence in our Lord for the obtaining of it; whereupon I spoke to *Father Antonio* to bethink himself of doing all he could, to gather together, and lay up something for the House, and the new *Covvent*: and forthwith I departed with Father *John della Croce* to the *Foundation* of *Valladolid*, already described: and, whilst we were necessitated to tarry some days among the Workmen, for enclosing the House, because it had no Clauſure, I had an opportunity of acquainting Father *John della Croce* with our whole manner of proceeding, and living, to the end he might fully understand all the particulars thereof, as well touching our Mortifications, as touching the manner of our conversation, and recreations, which we are wont to use together: for, all is with so much Moderation, that it only serves to discover thereby the Abilities, and Defects of the *Sisters*, and to take a little refreshment, the better to support the rigour of the *Rule*. He was so very good, that I might questionless have learnt much more from him, than he from me; but that was not my design, who only pretended to shew him the Form, and Method of the *Sister's* proceeding.

It pleased God, that the *Father Provincial* of our *Order* should be here, called *Fr. Alonso González*, an old man, one very good, and harmless, without the least malice; of whom I was to get a Licence; and, asking it of him, I urged so many reasons to him, particularly, concerning the account he should give to God, if he hindered so good a work; that, his

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Divine Majesty disposing him (as He, that intended to have it done) he was much mollified. There coming hither also the *Lady Donna Maria de Mendoza*, and her Brother, the Bishop of *Avila*, who is one, that hath ever favoured, and protected us, they soon obtained his consent, and Father *Angelo de Salazar's* also, who was the former Provincial, from whom I feared all the difficulty: but there fell out just then an accident, in which he had need of the favour of the *Lady Donna Maria de Mendoza*; and this (I believe) furthered it much; besides that, had not this reason served, our Lord would have inspired, and put it into his mind, as he did into the *Father General's*, who also was far enough from any consenting, or even thinking thereon. O my Lord! how many things have I seen in these affairs, that seemed impossible, and how easie was it, for thy *Majesty* to facilitate them! and what a confusion is it to me (having seen what I have seen) to be no better, than I am! For, now, whilst I write this, I am in a wonder, and desire, our Lord would manifest to all the World, that in these *Foundations* we poor creatures have as it were done nothing at all; but our Lord hath ordered, and disposed all by the means of so very mean beginnings, as that only his *Majesty* was able to exalt it to what it now is. Be He for ever Blessed. Amen.

C H A P. XVIII.

She goes on in relating the Foundation of the first Covent of Discalced Carmelites. She tells something concerning the Life they led there; and of the good, they began to do in those Parts.

AS soon as I had got the consent of these Two, methought now nothing more wanted. We agreed, that *Father John della Croce* should go to the House, and prepare it in such sort, that they might enter upon it, and begin there as well as they could; for, I made all haste to have them begin; because I was much afraid, we should meet with some obstacle; and so it was dispatched. *Father Antonio* had already got together some small things that were necessary, and we assisted likewise in what we could, though it were little. He came to *Valladolid* to speak with me, full of joy, and told me the provision, he had made, which was mean enough; only he was well stored with *Hour-glasses*, whereof he brought five with him; which made me laugh heartily. He told me, that, for the exact

exact measuring of their hours, he was not willing to go unprovided : I suppose, they had as yet no place to sleep in. There was but little stay in fitting up the house ; for, there wanted Money, if they would have done much. After this, *Father Antonio* with very great Willingness quitted his *Priory*, and took the *Vow* of observing the *first Rule* : for, though I bade him try it first, he would not ; and so went to his little Cottage with the greatest content in the World. *Father John* was there already.

Father Antonio told me, that, when he came to have a sight of the place, he felt an exceeding great inward joy, and seemed to have done with the World, and utterly abandoned it, in his very entring into that Solitude : and neither the one, nor the other thought the house amiss, but imagined themselves rather to live in great delicacy. Good God, how little do these buildings, and external Conveniences contribute to the Interior ! For his love I beseech you, my *Sisters*, and you, *O Fathers*, that ye never faile to shew your selves very moderate ; in this Particular of great, and stately *Monasteries* : let us look upon our true *Founders*, which are those Holy *Fathers*, of whom we are descended, since we know, that by the way of Poverty, and Humility, they attained the fruition of God.

The truth is, I have seen, that there hath been more of the *Spirit*, and likewise more inward Joy, when the body seemed to want certain commodities, and to be ill at ease, than when they have had a large *Covet*, and spacious Habitation. What are we the better ? since it is only a little *Cell*, we continually have the use of : and, whether it be well built, or very large, what advantage is it to us ? For, we are not to look at walls ; but to consider, that this is no house, to last us for ever ; but for the short time of our life, how long soever it be : and all will become sweet to us, in seeing, that, the less, we have here, the more we shall enjoy in that *Eternity*, where there are Mansions proportionable to the Love, wherewith we have imitated the life of our Good *Jesus*. If we say, These are the beginnings of renewing the *Rule* of the *Virgin* his *Mother*, our *Lady*, and *Patroness*, let us not, do her, nor our Holy *Fathers*, and *Predecessors* such a displeasure, as to neglect to conform our selves to them : and, although we cannot do it in every thing, by reason of our weakness, yet at least in things that no way import, nor conduce to the sustaining of our life, we ought to proceed with much restraint, since all is but a small, Savoury, and Delightful, sufferance ; as these two *Fathers* found it : and, by resolving with our selves to suffer, the difficulty is over ; for, all the pain felt is but a little in the beginning..

In the Year 1568. on the first, or second Sunday of Advent (for I do not remember, which of these two it was) the first *Mass* was said in this little Portal of Bethlehem; for no better seemed it to me. The Lent following, as I went to the Foundation of Toledo, I passed by it, and came thither one morning, as Father Antonio de Jesu was sweeping the door of the little Church, with a cheerful countenance, as he hath always: said I to him; *What is this, Father, what is become of your Honour?* He made me this answer (implying the great content, he enjoyed) *I abhor the time, that ever I made any account thereof.* When I came into the Church, I was astonished to behold the Spirit our Lord had put there; and not I alone, but two Merchants, who, being my very loving Friends, would needs bear me company from Medina, did nothing but weep; It had so many *Crosses*, so many *Deaths-heads*. I shall never forget one little *Cross* of Wood, that was by the *Holy-water*, to which was fastened a *Paper Crucifix*, that caused more Devotion, than if it had been of costlier matter, curiously wrought. The Loft between the Arch, and Roof of the house all along in the middle and highest part of it was the *Quire*, where they could say the *Hours* well; but, to enter into it, and to hear *Mass*, one must stoop much. On the two sides of the Garret toward the Church they had made two little *Hermitages* (in which they could not be, save either sitting, or lying along) stopped in the inside with Hay, because the place was very cold, and with their heads in a manner they touched the House-roof; toward the *Altar* were two little Windows made; and two Stones for their *Pillows*: and here also were there *Crosses*, and *Deaths-heads*. I understood, that, *Matins* ended, they returned not [to the Dormitory] to lye down, but, till saying *Prime*, continued in these in Prayer, which they had in an high degree; and it fell out many times, that they went to *Prime* with their Habits covered with Snow, and perceived it not. They recited their *Canonical Hours* with another *Father* of the *Ryle relaxed*, that went to live with them, though he did not change his Habit, being very sickly; and with another *Religious Person*, a young man, not yet in *Holy Orders*, who also lived with them. They went about preaching in divers places adjoyning, the people in those Parts being very rude, and without any Learning, so that in this respect I was glad, that this *Covent* was Erected there, because I was told, there was never a one near, where People might hear *Mass*, *Confess*, and learn that, which every *Christian* is bound to know, which indeed is great pity. The Reputation, they in a short time gained, was so great, that, when I heard of it, I received exceeding much Consolation thereby. They went, (as they say) to Preach six, or eight Miles off, barefoot (for, they wore no Sandals)

dals then, which they were afterward enjoyned to were) in great Snows, and cold : and, when they had done Preaching, and Confessing, they came back to their Meale at home, very late, but with such content, that all their Suffering seemed little to them. As for Diet, they were sufficiently furnished, for the Neighbouring people in all the adjoyning Villages bestowed Charity on them, and supplied them with more than they needed. Some Gentlemen likewise that dwelt in those Parts, and Towns about, came to their Church, and Covent to Confession, and offered them other Houses, and better seats ; among whom one was *Don Lewis*, Lord of *Quinque-Ville*. This Gentleman had built a Church for a famous, and exquisite Image of our *Lady*, the most Holy *Virgin*, worthy indeed of Veneration : his Father sent it out of *Flanders*, to his Grandmother, or Mother (I remember not which) by a Merchant, who took such liking to this Picture, that he kept it by him divers years ; but afterward, drawing near his end, he commanded it to be restored, and conveyed to the right owner. It is a large piece, and in my life I never saw a better ; as likewise others witness.

Father *Antonio de Jesu* going thither at this Gentleman's request, when he saw the Picture, was so taken with it (and very justly) that he consented to Found a Covent here, and quit the Foundation of *Durvelo*, though this place had no Well-water, nor any likelihood of having any : the place's name is *Manzera*. This Gentleman caused a House to be built for them, agreeable to their Profession, that is, a little one ; he gave them Furniture too, and was very bountiful to them. I will not pass in silence, how our Lord gave them Water ; it being held a thing miraculous. Father *Antonio* (who was Prior) being one day after Supper in the Cloister with his Religious, they discoursing of the need, they had of Water, the Prior rose up, and taking a Staff, which he used to carry in his hand, being Ancient, made with it in a certain part thereof the sign of the Cross (as I think, for I remember not justly whether he made a Cross, but in fine, he marked out the place with his Stick) and bid, Now dig here : they had not digged very deep, but presently there came forth such plenty of Water, that, there being occasion since sometimes of cleansing the Well, it is a difficult thing to drain, and empty it : and the water is very good to drink ; so, that they use it in all offices, and (as I said) it never fails. Afterward they walled in a Garden, and endeavoured to get Water here, by making for that purpose a certain Instrument with a Wheel (which they call *Noria*) yet hitherto, though it hath cost them much, they have not found any considerable quantity.

Now, to return to our little Covent at *Durvelo*, When I saw that Cottage,

tage, which a litle before could not be dwelt in, endued with such a Spirit, that whithersoever I turned me, I was edified, and understood their manner of Living, and Mortifications, and Prayer, with the good example, they gave (for a Gentleman, and his Wife of my acquaintance, who dwelt hard by, came to see me, and related at large to me the Sanctity of those Fathers, and the great good, they did among the People) I could not satisfie my self in rendring our Lord thanks with an excellent inward Joy; for, methought, I saw already a Foundation laid for the great Increase of our Order, and Service of our Lord. His Divine Majestie vouchsafe to carry it on, as at present he doth; for, then my conceit will prove true. The Merchants, that came along with me, told me, they would not for all the World, but have come thither. Now, see, what a power *Virtue* hath: they were more pleased with that *Poverty*, than with all the Riches, they possessed, and they remained, thereby in their minds much satisfied, and comforted.

After those Fathers and I had treated about some things, I (as a weak, and miserable Creature) earnestly requested them, not to proceed in the busyness of Penance with so much rigor; for their Austerities were great: and, since it had cost me so much pains in Desiring, and Praying, that our Lord would give me some to begin this work, and already it had taken so good a rise, I was afraid, the Devil would seek out a way to bring them to their Deaths, before that were effected, which I expected, and hoped-for; and, being imperfect, and of so little Faith, I considered not, that it was a work of God, and that his Divine Majestie was to carry it on. But, they, as having that perfection, and Spirit, which I wanted, made little account of my words, for omitting their exercises. So I departed with very great Consolation, although I rendred not to God that praise, and thanks, which so high a favour deserved. Our Lord vouchsafe, of his goodness, to make me in something worthy to serve him answerable to the very much I owe him. Amen. For I sufficiently understood, that this was, by much, a greater favour, than that, he had done me in Founding the Monasteries of Nuns.

C H A P. XIX.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery of the Glorious S. Joseph in the City of Toledo, which followed in the Year 1569.

There lived in the City of *Toledo* a *Merchant*, an eminent man, and a Servant of God, who would never Marry, but lived as a good *Catholick* should, a very upright, and virtuous Person : he improved his Estate by lawful Traffick, with a purpose to bestow it in some work most acceptable to God : his name was *Martin Ramire ζ* . He sickned to death, and a Father of the *Society of Jesus*, named *Paul Hernande ζ* (to whom being in this City about settling the *Foundation* of *Malagon*, I confessed) hearing thereof, and desiring much, that a *Monastery* of *Discalced Nunns* might be Erected in *Toledo*, went thereupon to visit him, and in discourse told him, that, if he inclined to serve our Lord with his Estate, a very fair occasion of doing it presented it self to him ; for, he might Erect a *Monastery* of *Discalced Carmelite Nunns*, whereby our Lord might be greatly served, and here place what *Chaplains*, and *Chapelries*, he pleased : where likewise certain *Festivals* might be kept, and all that done, which he intended to leave to a certain *Parish* in this City. He was so very ill, that he knew, he had not that time, that was requisite for the ordering all this : whereupon he left the busines in the hands of his *Brother*, whose name was *Alonso Alvarez Ramire ζ* , a very discreet Person, who feared God, very Just, Charitable, and in all things hearkening to reason : for, this (as being an eye-witness, and of much dealing with him) I may say of him with great truth.

When *Martin Ramire ζ* died, I was at the *Foundation* of *Valladolid*, and there received Letters from *P. Paul Hernande ζ* , and this *Alonso Alvarez*, wherein they gave me an account of what had passed, wishing me, if I would accept this *Foundation*, to dispatch my Journey, and presently put my hand to this busines : and so I departed a litle after the House of *Valladolid* was fitted up. I came to *Toledo* the 24th. of *March*, being the Vigil of the *Holy Incarnation* of the Son of God our *Lord*, and I went to alights at the Houle of the *Lady Donna Luisa della Cerd α* , where I had somtimes been about the *Foundation* of *Malagon*. I was very kindly received ; for this *Lady* bare me great affection. I brought along with me from *S. Joseph's* of *Avila* two Companions, [*Isabella de Santo Domingo*; and *Isabella de Sto. Paulo*] great Servants of God ; presently an apparte-

appartement was assigned us (as we use to have) where we enjoyed the same retirement, as in a *Monastery*. I straight began, without losing time, to treat with *Alonjo Alvarez*, about our busines; but a Son-in-Law of his called *Diego Horte* (though a very good man, and a *Divine*) being more addicted, than *Alonso*, to his own opinion, yielded not so soon to reason: they began to demand of me many conditions, which I judged not fit, to grant. We went on with our agreement, and at the same time sought out for a House to let, for the taking Possession; yet could meet with none convenient, though much enquiry was made; neither could I prevail with the *Governour*, to give me a Licence (for at that time there was no *Archbishop*) though, on one side, the *Lady Dona Luisa de la Cerdá*, and, on the other a Gentleman, *Cavall* of that *Church*, called *Don Pedro Manrique*, Son to the President of *Castile*, endeavoured it: he was a great Servant of God, and is still; for, he is living; and although he were sickly, yet, some Years after this *House* was Founded, he entred into the *Society of Jesus*; where he now is: he was highly reputed in this *City*, being one of an excellent understanding, and Authority: Notwithstanding with all their power, and very great diligence, I could not obtain a Licence; for, when the *Governour* was somewhat pacified, and sweetened, those of the *Arch-Bishops Council* opposed. On the other side we could not agree with *Alonjo Alvarez*, by reason of his Son-in-Law, whom he much relied on in this busines; so we quite broke off all: I know not, what to do, for I went thither upon no other account but this; and I saw, that to go away without Founding the House would be a great disparagement: yet I was troubled more at the having no Licence, than at all the rest; for I hoped, that, Possession being taken, our Lord would provide every thing else, as in other places he had done: so I resolved to speak with the *Governour*, and, repairing to a *Church* near his House, sent to intreat him, he would be pleased to let me speak with him: it was now above two Months that this thing was negotiated, and every day it went worse; for there was one (as I understood) that privately did ill offices with the *Governour*? He came thither, whom, when I approached, I told: That it was a hard case, that poor Women should come hither, who desired to live, in all Rigour, Perfection, and Clauſure; and that they, who endure none of all this, but enjoy their Recreations, and Pleasures, should go about to obstruct a work so much tending to the Service of God.

With these, and divers other things, which with great freedom I spake to him, as our Lord enabled me, I so changed his mind, that, before I left him, he granted me a Licence. Hereupon I was much comforted, conceiving

conceiving my self now to have all, when I had nothing; for, all my stock made but three, or four *Crowns*, with which I bought two *Pictures* drawn upon *Cloth*, (because I had never a one to set upon the *Altar*) two *Straw-beds*, and a *Coverlet*: I knew no thing of a *Houſe*, and treated now no more with *Alfonso Alvarez*. A *Merchant* of the same City, called *Alfonso d'Avila*, a loving Friend of mine, one who had always lived fingle, applying himself only to works of Piety, and particularly the relieving Prisoners, bade me, not afflict my self; for he would find me a *houſe*, but he hapned then to fall sick, and could not procure one. A few days before came to *Toledo* *Father Martin de la Cruz*, a *Franciscan*, one of eminent Sanctity; he continued here some days, and at his departure sent to me a young man, his Penitent, called *Andrade*, very poor, whom he desired to do whatever I shoud bid him. I being one morning in the *Church* at *Mas*, he came to find me out, and told me, what that good *Father* had commanded him; assuring me, that in all, he could he wold serve me, though he said, he could do so only with his Person: I thanked him, and laughed heartily, as my *Companions* also did more, to see what a help that *Holy* man had sent us; for, his garbe was not fit for conversing with *Discalced Nuns*.

Now, when I saw my self furnished with a Licence, and no body to help me, I knew not what to do, nor whom to apply my self to; I recalled to mind the young man, *Father Martin de la Cruz* sent to me, and mentioned him to my *Companions*: they laughed at me exceedingly, advising me, not to attempt such a thing; for, he would serve for nothing, but to discover the busyness, and utterly defeat it. I would not hearken to them, for (because he was sent by that Servant of God) I was confident, he would prove some way useful, and that it was not without a Mystery. I sent to call him, and gave him an account of what had passed, strictly enjoyning him Secrecy; and so I desired him to look me out a *Houſe*; and for the hire of it I would give Security: this I made account *Alfonso d'Avila* would do, who (as I said) was fallen ill. He thought it a very easie matter, and so told me, he would warrant me to find one. So, the next morning, I being at *Mas* in a *Church* of the *Fathers* of the *Society of Jesus*, he came to speak with me, and told me, that now he had found a *Houſe*, and brought the Keyes with him, for it was near, that we might go see it: we did so, and found it so convenient, that we dwelt there almost a Year. Many times, when I think on this Foundation, I am astonished at the ways of God; for, some three Months (above two, at least, because I do not well remember) certain wealthy Persons went continually about *Toledo*, looking out for a *Houſe*, and could find

none, as though there had never been any ; yet, when this poor young man went, our Lord was pleased, that presently, in an evening he should find one : and, when a *Monastery* might have been Erected without any trouble, if I had agreed with *Alonso Alvarez*, that I should not do it ; but rather the quite contrary, that so the *Foundation*, might be in poverty, and labour.

So, the house liking us, I presently gave order, that there should be Possession taken of the *Monastery*, before any thing else were done in it, or any disturbance might arise there. Not long after, *Andrada* before mentioned came to tell me, that the house would that day be empty, and that, after it was fitted up a little, we might send our goods thither : I told him, there was little to do ; for, all our Furniture was but two Straw-beds, and a Coverlet ; at which he must needs wonder. My *Companions* were not well pleased with this answer of mine, and asked me, why I would say so to him ? For, when he saw us so poor, he would refuse to help us ; indeed I reflected not on it, neither did he make any account thereof ; for He that bestowed on him the will to help us, would also continue it, to the finishing of the work : and so he did ; for, as to the diligence, and care, he used, in preparing the House, and getting workmen, I see not, that we our selves could in any thing have out-done him. We borrowed things necessary for the saying *Mas*, and in the beginning of the night we went hence with a Workman to the house, carrying a little Bell with us, to take Possession, such as they tinkle at the *Elevation* ; for, we had no other : and so with much fear of mine we were all night in settling it : but I found no place to make the *Chappel* in, save in a room, which was to have an entrance to it through another little house, that stood on one side of it, which also the *Landlady* had let out to us : but then there lived certain Women in it, to whom I durst say nothing, lest they should discover us. Every thing being now ready, and day approaching, we began to open a door through a Partition-wall, made of Rods, paling into a little Court. The Women, who were asleep, and thought nothing thereon, as soon as they heard the Blows, rose in a fear, and anger ; and we had much ado to pacifie them ; but, though for a while they were inflexible, at length, when they saw how it was, with some Money, that I gave them, and the promising to find them out a house, they were quieted, and did no hurt, our Lord appealing them : and at it's due time *Mas* was said.

I saw afterward how ill we had done ; for, at the present, by reason of the Unapprehensiveness which God puts into us, to dispatch a work, the inconveniences are not discerned. For, when the *Mistress* of the house,

house, who had been the Wife of a *Majorasco*, understood, that her house was turned into a *Church*, a great stir there was, and much ado she kept; but our Lord was pleased, that she should be pacified, upon the hopes, that, if she gave us content, we would buy it of her. When they of the *Council* knew, there was Erected a *Monastery*, for which they never intended to grant a *Licence*, they were extreamly incensed; and, not finding the *Gouvernour* at present (for, after his granting the *Licence*, he had an occasion to take a journey) they stormed exceedingly, and went to the house of a principal *Canon* of the *Church*, whom I had privately acquainted with the busines, telling him, they much admired the audaciousness of a silly Woman, that against their mind would Erect a *Monastery*; threatening sore. He answered them, as if he knew nothing; and sought to quiet them, the best he could; acquainting them, how I had done the same thing in other places; and that I would never have attempted it, without sufficient Authority. They (I know not how many days after this) sent us an *Excommunication*, forbidding *Mass* to be said, till we produced the *Licence*, and Authority, by which it was done. I answered with all meekness, that I would do what they commanded, though I was not obliged in that particular to obey them; and I requested *Dñs Pedro Marrique* (the *Gentleman*, I spoke of) to go and talke with them, shewing them the Letters, I had from my *Superiors*: He did so, and by his Activity, and Authority (especially the *Monastery* being already finished) appeased them; otherwise, we should not have wanted for troubles.

For some days we continued with only two Straw-beds, and a Coverlet, without other Furniture; yea, that day, that Possession was taken, we had not so much, as a stick of Wood to broile a Sprat with; and our Lord moved, I know not whom, to lay in the *Church* a Faggot of Wood, where-with we supplied our want. At nights we suffered cold; for, it was very sharp Weather, although we covered our selves with the Coverlet, and with our Mantles of thick Cloth, which many times bespeared us. It will seem incredible, that, living in the house of that *Lady*, who loved me, so well, we should enter here with so great Poverty. I know no other reason thereof, save, that God would have us experience the benefit of this vertue: I asked nothing; for, I hate being burdensome to any; and, it may be, she reflected not on it, perhaps, because I am indebted to her already for much more, than that, she could give us.

But, this was a special benefit to us; for, the Internal Consolation, and Joy we felt therefrom, was so great, that oftentimes I call to mind the extraordinary good, which our Lord keeps locked up in these Vertues. Me-thinks,

thinks, this want, we sustained, occasioned a kind of delicious Contemplation, though of short continuance ; for, presently *Alvarez* himself, and others, came, who supplied us further, than we desired. And indeed my sadness thereupon was so great, that I seemed as one, who, professed of divers rich Jewels, and store of Gold, had them stolen from me, and were left poor, just so was I troubled at the loss of Poverty : The same Affliction felt my Companions ; for, seeing them dejected, I asked them, what they ailed : they answered me : *What is there for us to do, Mother, who seemed to our selves no longer Poor ?*

From that time forward the desire of being very poor increased still in me, and there remained in me a certain Mastery to hold in little esteem all Temporal things ; since the want of them discovers an Internal benefit, and Consolation, which indeed carries with it another kind of satiety, and content. In those days, when I treated about the Foundation with *Alonso Alvarez*, divers disliked it, and came and told me, they thought it not fit, to give him the honour of it, because he was of no eminent, or noble House (though, as I said, he was very considerable in his degree) and that, in a place so publick, as *Toledo* was, I could not want better terms, and conveniences. I regarded not this much, for (God be thanked) I ever prized Virtue above Lineage : but the out-cries concerning it made to the *Gouvernour* were so many, that, when he gave me a Licence, it was on this condition, that I should Found it, as I had done in other Parts ; namely, without *Rent*, or *Patron*, or *Founder*.

I knew not what to conclude on ; for, the Monastery being finished, *Alonso Alvarez* began anew to treat of the busines ; but, it being now settled, I made use of this expedient, to align him only the greater *Chappel*, so that, as to what concerned the *Monastery*, he should meddle in nothing ; but it should be free, as it now is. There was already another, that desired the greater *Chappel*, and there wanted not grounds, and some to solicit me, to let him have it ; so that I knew not what to resolve on. But our Lord on this occasion was pleased to give me light, and take away my doubt ; for, being in Prayer once, he made me understand, how little Nobility, and Honour is regarded before *Gods Tribunal*, and gave me a sharp reprehension, for listening to them, that talked to me thereof : for, they were not things befitting persons, who had contemned the World, as we professed to do.

With these, and other reasons, I was in great confusion, and resolved to finith the agreement begun, of giving *Alonso Alvarez* the greater *Chappel*, whereof I never repented me ; for, being very short of Money

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to purchase a House, with his help we procured that, where we now are, which is one of the best in *Toledo*, and cost twelve thousand Crowns : and, in regard so many *Masses* are said there, it is a great Consolation both to the *Nuns*, and to the People. Had I heeded the vain opinions of the World, (so far as we can judge) it had been impossible, to have gotten so good conveniences, and an injury done to him, who so freely bestowed this Charity on us.

C H A P. XX.

Of some things that fell out in this Monastery of S. Joseph at Toledo.

IT seems to me pertinent here, to relate some of those things, which the *Religious Women* did in the Service of our Lord, for the exercise of Virtue ; to the end they, who shall succeed, may endeavour still to imitate those good beginnings. Before the House was bought, there was a *Nun* admitted here, called *Anna de Matre Dei*, of the Age of fourty Years, who had spent her whole life in the Service of God ; and, though for her condition, and in her own house, she wanted no Conveniences, being single, and very rich, chose nevertheless to prefer Holy poverty, and obedience in a *Religious Order*, and so came to speak with me about it. She was very sickly, yet, when I saw a Soul so well resolved, it seemed to me a good beginning for the *Foundation*, and so I admitted her. It pleased God to give her much better health in Authority, and Obedience, than she had in the midst of her Liberty, and Delights : but that, which caused in me Devotion (and therefore I here mention it) was ; that, before she made her *Profession*, she bestowed by way of Alms on the *Monastery* her whole Estate. This I liked not, and would not admit of ; telling her, that, possibly, she might repent it, or that afterward perhaps we might not admit her to *Profession* ; which if it fell out, what would she do ? That this thing would seem very hard to her : (although, when it should have come to this, we would not have dismissed her, without restoring all, that she had given us.) But I was willing to aggravate it much to her ; first, that it might be no occasion of Temptation afterward ; secondly, the better to try her Spirit. She answered me, that, when this should come to pass, she would willingly lose all this Wealth for the love of God, and that with very great content she would go a begging : and nothing

thing else could I get from her : she lived afterward with much content, and better health.

In this *Monastery* the *Nuns* practised Mortification, and Obedience very rigorously, in such sort, that, for the time I lived there I observed, that otherwhiles it concerned the *Prioreſſ* to take heed, how ſhe ſpake to them ; for (though it were careleſly, or in jest) they would ſtraight do whatever ſhe bid them. I was once looking on a *Pond* of Water, that was in the *Garden*, and ſaid, pointing at her, who was next it, *What would you ſay, if I ſhould bid this Sister, throw her ſelf in here ?* I had no sooner ſpoke, but the *Sister* leapt in : So that ſhe was fain to shift her *Habit*, ſhe was ſo wet. Another time (I being by) the *Nuns* went to Confefſion ; and, whilſt one ſtaid for another, who was Confefſing, the *Prioreſſ*, coming thither, asked her, *Why ſhe stood ſo ? and, if that were a good poſture to recollect her ſelf ? That ſhe ſhould put her head in the Well (that was by) and there think on her Sins.* She underſtood, that ſhe was to caſt her ſelf into the *Well*, and went in ſuch hatt to do it, that, had they not preſently ſtopped her, ſhe had certainly thrown her ſelf in, thinking, ſhe did God the greateſt Service in the World (or the like) and an act of extraordinary Mortification. So that it was needful, that ſome Learned perſons ſhould explain to them, wherein they were to obey, and ſhould reſtrain them ; for, they did ſome things ſo extreame, and rigorous, that, if their good intention had not excuſed them, they had offendred rather, than Merited thereby. And it is not only thus in this *Monastery*, (of which occaſionally I ſpeak here) but in all of them there are ſo many things of this Nature, that I wiſh, I were not a party here, that I might freely recount ſome of them, to the end our Lord may be Praifeſed in thoſe his Servants.

It fell out, whilſt I was yet there, that a *Sister* ſickned to death ; who, after receiving the moſt Holy *Sacrament*, and *Extreme Unction*, was ſo chearful, and pleafant, that ſhe seemed already to be in Heaven, and that we miſt intreat her to recommend us to *God*, and to thoſe *Saints*, to whom we had a particular Devotion. A little before ſhe expired I (having been before the *B. Sacrament*, to beſeech our Lord to grant her a good end) went into her Chamber, to ſtay with her, and at my entring I ſaw our Lord about the middle of the Beds-head, with his Arms ſomewhat open, as who stood protecſing her, and bade me : *Be confident, all the Nuns, that ſhould dy in theſe Monasteries, He would ſo defend; and that they ſhould not fear any Temptation at the hour of death.* I remained exceedingly conformed, and recollected in Prayer. A little after I went to ſpeak to her, and ſhe ſaid to me : *O Mother, what great things are prepared for me to ſee !* And hereupon expired, looking as amiable as an *Angel.*

I observed in several that died afterward, that their departure was with a certain repose, and Peace, as if they had been in a Rapt, or Extasy, or the Prayer of Quiet, without shewing any sign of a Temptation. So that I hope in the *Divine Goodness*, he will still vouchsafe us this grace, and favour for the Merits of his *Blessed Son*, and of his *Glorious Mother*, whose Habit we weare. Wherefore, let us, my dear Daughters, endeavour to be true *Discalced Carmelites*; for, the labour will quickly be over: and, if we understood the great Affliction, many sustain in the instant of death, and the Artifices, and Delusions, wherewith the Devil tempts them, we would make great account of this favour.

One thing, which comes to mind, I will here relate, about a Person, that I knew, being somewhat akin to my Kindred. He was a great Gamester, and had got some smattering of Learning, by means whereof the Devil in his Sicknes began to deceive him, making him believe, that reforming at the hour of death availed nothing: herein he was so confident, that they could by no means perswade him, to confess, nor would any thing prevale with him. He was poor wretch extreamly afflicted, and sorry for his wicked Life; but wherefore, said he, should he confess, since he saw already, he was damned? A Dominican Father, that was his Confessor, a very Learned man, did nothing but reprehend him, refuting that his erroneous opinion; but the Devil taught him such subtleties, that he prevailed nothing. Thus he continued some days, the Confessor not knowing, what to do more; but both he, and others, recommended him very earnestly to God, doubtles, since he took pity on him. His Malady much increasing (which was a pain in his side) his Confessor came to him again, bringing with him, questionles, still more studied arguments, to convince him; but yet little could all have availed, if our Lord had not had pity on him, by softening his heart. As soon as the Confessor now began to speak to him, and alledge some arguments to move him, he fale up in his Bed, as though he ailed nothing, and said: *Well, since you tell me, Father, that my Confession may profit me, I desire to make it:* And, causing a Notary to be fetched, he very solemnly took an Oath never to Game more, and to reform his Life, and thereof took Witness. He made a very good Confession, and received the *Sacraments* with such Devotion, that, by what can be conjectured, according to our way of Belief, he was saved. Our Lord grant, my Sisters, that we may lead the lives of true Daughters of the *B. Virgin*, and keep up our Profession, that our Lord may do us the favour, he hath promised us. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

The Foundation of the two Monasteries in Pastrana, both for Friars, and Nunns Discalceate, the same Year, 1569.

Having taken Possession of the *Monastery* Erected at *Toledo*, after fifteen days pains in fitting of the little Church, putting up Grates, and doing other things very troublesome ; for, as I said, we lived about a Year in this house ; being quite tired out in those days with continually dealing with Workmen ; when all was now finished, on *Whitsun-Eve*, as we were at dinner in the *Refectory*, so great a delight seized me, to see that now I had no more to do, and that I should be able this *Festival* to entertain my self with our Lord for some time, that I could scarce eat, I found my self inwardly so overjoyed. This Consolation lasted not long ; for, being thus affected, they came to tell me, that a Servant of the *Princess d' Evoli*, the Wife of *Ruy Gomez de Silva*, was at the door expecting me ; I went to the *Rota*, to know his busines, which was, that the *Princess* had sent for me ; for, long since, some agreement, and speech had passed betwixt her, and me, about Erecting a *Monastery* in *Pastrana* : yet I never imagined, it was to be so soon. This troubled me ; because, the *Monastery* of *Toledo* being so lately Founded, and with so much opposition, it was very dangerous to leave it ; so, for the present I resolved not to go ; and so I told him ; he replied, that this seemed to him, not to be so well ; because his *Lady* was there already, and came thither for no other end, and that she would take it for an affront. For all that I had no mind to go ; and so wished him to take his Dinner, and I in the mean time would write to the *Princess*, and afterward he might return. He was a very Honourable Person, and although the thing displeased him, yet, when he understood my reasons, he was satisfied.

The *Nunns*, who were but newly come to live in this *Monastery*, saw no way, how I could leave that House so soon. I cast my self before the most *Holy Sacrament*, beseeching our *Lord* to grant me the favour, to write so to the *Princess*, as not to offend her : for, great opposition threatening us, in regard the *Covents of Discalceate Friars* were then beginning, for this, and every thing else, it was fit, and requisite to have the *Prince Ruy Gomez* his favour, who had great Authority with the *King*, and withal (though I remember not that at the present, I reflected on it.)

but I know well, I would not have displeased him. In this occasion it was said to me from our *Lord*: *That I should not neglect to go; for I went for more than that Foundation; and that I should carry with me the Rule, and the Constitutions.* When I understood this, though I had strong reasons for my not going thither, I durst do no other, than what in like cases I use, which is, to steer by the direction of my *Confessor*; and so I sent for him, without acquainting him, what in my Prayer I had understood: for, by taking this course, I am ever best satisfied, beseeching our *Lord* to give him light, suitable to that which he may naturally know, and his *Majesty* (when he is pleased to have a thing done) puts it into their hearts: which thing hath oft befallen me.

My *Confessor* therefore well weighing it, as likewise he useth to do all other things, was of opinion, that I should go; and so I determined to be gone the second day of the Feast of the *Holy Ghost*. And because we passed through *Madrid*, my Companions and I went to Lodge in a *Monastery* of *Discalced Nuns* of the *Order* of *S. Francis*, where was a *Lady*, their *Foundress*, called *Dona Leonora de Masegadas* (who had been *Governess* to the *King*) a great Servant of *God*; where also I had at other times been Lodged on some occasions, that drew me that way, and she always shewed me great kindness.

This *Lady* told me, she was glad, I came thither so seasonably; for, here was a *Hermit*, that much desired my acquaintance, and it seemed to her, that the life, which he, and his Companions led, was very conformable to our *Rule*. I, having but two *Friars*, thought, if I could get him to take our Habit of *Discalceate*, it would be a great matter; and so I prayed her, to let us talke together. He lived in a Lodging, which this *Lady* had given him, with another Companion, a young man, called *Fr. John de la Miseria*, a great Servant of *God*, and very simple in matters of the *World*. Now, when we two came to conferr together, he told me, that he intended to go to *Rome*. But, before I proceed further, I have a mind to relate, what I know of this *Father*, called *Mariam de Saincto Benedicto*. He was by Nation an *Italian*, a *Doctor*, and one of very great wit, and parts; being entertained in the *Queen of Polana's Court* for *Steward* of her *House* (having no mind to Marry, and retaining only a *Commendam* in the *Order* of the *Knights of Malta*) he was by *God* called to a retired life, with an Inspiration to quit all, the better to attend his own Salvation. He had sustainted some troublies, and, among others, was accused for a certain *Murder*, for which they kept him two Years in *Prison*, where he would not permit either an *Advocate*, or any else to defend his *Cause*, but committed

committed himself wholly into the hands of *God*, who knew his Innocence. On the contrary, there being witnesses, which affirmed, they were called by him to kill that man, it fell out (almost like the *Elders of Susanna*) that, being each examined apart, where he was, when he called them ; one said, that he sate upon a Bed ; another said, that he was at a Window : at last they confessed it was a slander, and a lye. And he assured me, it afterward cost him a good Summ, to get them freed without being punished : moreover, that the same party, who had raised all that stirr against him, fell into his hands, that he might give a certain testimony in favour of him ; and that he did his utmost endeavour herein not to prejudice him.

For these, and other vertues (being a Person so pure, chaste, and abhoring all Converse with Women) questionless he Merited, that our *Lord* should give him light, to know the World, what it was, that he might endeavour to sequester himself from it : whereupon he began to think, what *Order* he should enter into, and take the Habit of : and examining first one, then another, he found in all Inconveniences for one of his condition, as he told me. He understood, that near *Sevil*, in a *Desert*, called *Tardon*, certain *Hermites* lived together, having for Superior a very Holy man, named *Father Matthew* : each had his *Cell* apart, without laying the *Divine Office*, but they met in an *Oratory* to hear *Mass* ; they had no Revenue ; and neither asked, nor received, Alms ; but maintained themselves with their Labour, and Handy-Work ; and every one eat by himself in much poverty. It seemed to me, when I heard of it, a Copy of those our *Holy Fathers*. In this course of life he continued eight Years. But, when the *Holy Council of Trent* sate, which enjoyned, that all *Hermites* should be reduced to the *Religious Orders* approved, he was minded to go to *Rome*, to obtain leave from the *See Apostolick*, for himself, and his present Companions to continue as formerly : this designe he had, when I spake with him. *I*, understanding this his manner of life, shewed him our Primitive *Rule*, and told him, that, without so much trouble, he might observe all that, seeing it was the same, especially that, of living by the labour of our hands, to which he was much inclined ; telling me, that the World was undone by their avarice, and that this caused in him a mean esteem of some *Religious* also : and, *I* being of the same opinion with him herein, we soon agreed even in all ; for, *I* representing to him the reasons, how much he might serve *God* in this our Habit, he told me, he would think on it that night. I already saw him as it were resolved, and began to imagine, this was that, which in Prayer *I* had understood ; namely, that *I* went for something more, than a *Monastery of Nuns* : *I* took extreme

extreme contentment therein, conceiving, that our *Lord* would be greatly served by this mans entring into the *Order*. His *Divine Majesty*, for that he willed it, so moved him that night, that prently the next day he sent for me, being now fully resolved to do, what I had wished him, not a litle wondering, to see himself so suddenly altered, especially by a Woman (as he still tells me sometimes) as if she only had been the cause, and not rather our *Lord*, who can change mens hearts.

Great are *Gods Judgments*; since, this man having spent so many years without knowing what state of Life to take to (for, the course, he then observed, was not Religious, making no Vows, nor having any thing of Obligation, but only living there solitary) his *Divine Majesty* should so instantly change him, and give him light to understand the great Service, he might do him in this state. In fine, our *Lord* was pleased to make use of him, to advance forward that, which was begun ; for, he hath promoted it much, it having at prent cost him, and being like to cost him much pains, before the *Order* (as far as can be known) be freed of the Contradictions, which as this day the Primitive *Rule* suffers, and labours under. But this *Father* being of eminent Authority, and Parts, as likewise of an excellent life, hath power with many principal Persons, that favour, and protect us.

He told me also, how *Prince Ruy Gomes* had given him in *Pastrana* (being the same place, whither I was going) a fair *Hermitage*, and Seat, for Erecting a *Congregation* of *Hermites*, and that he had a mind to Found it of our *Order*, and likewise take the Habit thereof. I shewed that I very kindly resented it, and greatly thanked our *Lord* for it ; because, though our most Reverend *Father General* had given me two Licences for two *Covents*, there was as yet but one Founded. And from thence I sent a meslage to the two *Fathers*, the former, and present *Provincial*, beseeching them to give me leave for it (because without their approbation it could not be done) and I writ to the *Bishop* of *Aszils Don Alvaro de Mendoza*, who much assited us, that he would procure us it. It pleased *God*, that they liked it ; conceiving, that, by Erecting a Foundation in a place so remote, no prejudice could come to them. They gave me their consent, and the *Bishop* also wrt to me, that the Licence was gotten already : whereupon I departed exceedingly satisfied. I found there the *Prince*, and *Prince Ruy Gomes*, who very courteously entertained me ; they assinged us a Lodging apart, where we staid longer, than I imagined ; because the house, which the *Prince* had allotted us, was very little, and she had caused a great part of it to be pulled down to the ground, to be New-built,

built, and fitted for convenience, though not the chief Walls, but several others pieces,

We lived here three Months, wherein we endured many, and great troubles, the Prince's requiring of me some conditions, which were not good for our Order: so I resolved rather to return without Erecting any Foundation, than consent to those demands. But the Prince Ruy Gomez, being very resonable, and discreet, with his mildness, which is great, somewhat tempered his Wife; and I also condescended to some things, because I had rather, that the Covent of Friers, than of Nuns, should be Erected; as knowing how much this imported, which afterward appeared. About this time came to Pastrana (as they promised me) Father Mariano, and his Companion, with the Hermites mentioned; and, a Licence being got, those Personages liked, that the Hermitage should be of Discalced Friers; so I sent for Father Antonio de Jesu (one of the first) who lived at Manzera, that he might begin the Founding of this Covent. I accomodated, and sewed, their Habits, and Clokes, working ashard as I could, that there might be no delay. At the same time I had sent for more Nuns to the Monastery of Medina del Campo; for I brought but two with me. There lived then at Medina a Calceate Carmelite, called Fr. Baltazar de Jesu; who, though somewhat ancient, was an excellent Preacher; who, understanding, that that Covent was Erected in Pastrana, came in the company of the Nuns, with a purpose of changing his Habit, and becoming Discalceate, as he did soon after his arrival; which when he told me, I exceedingly praised God for it. He gave the Habit to Father Mariano, and his Companion for Lay-Brothers; because Father Mariano desired not to be a Priest, but to be admitted as an Inferior, and to serve all; neither could I ever disswade him; though afterward, by command of our Father General, he was ordained Priest.

Now, these two Covents being Founded, and Father Antonio de Jesu being come, many good Novices were admitted there, of some of whom more shall be said hereafter, who began so in good earnest to serve our Lord, as (if he please) some one else may relate, who better than I knows how to do it, for that truly in this case I conceive my self insufficient. As to that, which concerns the Nuns, here was Erected a Monastery with much likeing of those Honourable Personages, the Prince's taking great care, till Prince Ruy Gomez died, of endearing, and kindly treating them; for, in her Widow-hood, the Devil procured (or perhaps our Lord permitted it, for what reason he knows) that, in a sudden paliion seizing her upon the death of her Husband, the Prince's became a Nun here, who, for the Affliction she had, could not much relish the observances of the

Order, in particular the clausure there, being not used to it : and, by reason of the *Decrees* of the *Holy Council of Trent*, the *Priors* could not grant her that liberty, she desired : so that she took offence at her, and at all, in such sort, as that, even after her quitting the Habit, and living in her own house, they still disgusted her ; and the poor *Nunns* endured so much trouble, that I laboured all the ways I could (intreating the *Superiors* herein) that the *Monastery* might be removed hence ; and, another being Founded in *Segovia* (as shall be shewn anon.) Thither the *Nunns* went, leaving what the *Princes* had given them, and taking with them some *Sisters*, whom she had commanded to be admitted without Portions. The Beds, and other little goods, that these *Sisters* brought, they took also away with them, leaving those of the place very sad ; but I had the greatest Joy in the world, to see them in peace : being sufficiently informed, that they had given no occasion of the *Princesse's* disgust ; nay, while she lived in the Habit, served, and honoured her, as before her taking it. But the occasion was only that, before mentioned ; and the grief, this *Lady* sustained for her Husbands death. A Servant, whom she took with her (as was afterward known) caused all the trouble. In brief, our *Lord*, who permitted it, must needs see, that that *Monastery* was not well here ; for, his Judgments are great, and transcend all our understanding. I should not upon my own head have been so bold in this matter, but that it was done with the advice of Learned, and Spiritual Persons.

CHAP. XXII.

The Foundation of the Monastery of Salamanca.

These two Foundations being finished, I returned to the City of *Toledo*, where I staid some Months, to purchase the House mentioned, and to leave all well settled there. Whilst I pursued this, the Father *Rector* of the Society of *Jesus* [*Martin Guierrius*] writ to me from *Salamanca*, certifying me, that one of our Monasteries might do good service in that City, alledging for it strong reasons ; though, because the place was poor, I was somewhat unwilling to Erect a House of Poverty here : but, considering that *Avila* is so too, and yet it never wanteth necessities, nor will *God*, I believe, ever fail him, that serves him (things being reasonably ordered, as they are ; the *Nunns* so few, and helping themselves

selves by working, and the labour of their hands) I determined to Found it. So, passing from *Tolso* through *Avila*, I from thence procured a Licence from the *Bishop*, who, then, was *Peter Gonzalez de Mendoza*; he, being by *Father Rector* informed of the Religious Discipline, which they observe in our *Monasteries*, and that it would be a service acceptable to *God*, presently granted it.

Methought, in all *Foundations*, having got once the *Ordinary's* Licence, the *Monastery* was as good as done, every thing else became so easie to me. Whereupon, without losing time, I endeavoured to hire a House, which a Gentlewoman of my acquaintance helped me to, though it was a difficult matter, being not the Season for letting of houses, and some Students dwelling there, who were by there Articles to leave it, when he that was to live in it came. They knew not, who it was for, nor for what use; for I took great care, that nothing should be known, before Possession taken; because I have learnt by Experience, how much the Devil labours to hinder one of these *Monasteries*; although our *Lord* gave him not power to obstruct this *Foundation* in it's beginning, because he would have it Erected; but afterward there were so many troubles, and oppositions which befell it, that this business is not yet quite finished, though some years be already run out since it's Erecting to this present, wherein I write this: and therefore I believe *God* is much served in this *Monastery*, because the Devil cannot endure it.

Having got the Licence, and assured the House, trusting in the mercy of *God*, (for, I had none here to assist me in any thing, though much was requisite for preparing the house) I departed, for the present taking with me only one Companion [*Maria de Santo Sacramento*] for going more privately, because I thought it best not to carry more *Nuns* till full Possession were taken, (for I was sufficiently warned by that which befell me in *Madina del Campo*, where I endured great troubles) because if any disturbance happened, I only should bear it, with my Companion; whom I took with me, because I could not go without one. We came thither on the *Vigil of All-Saints*, having travelled a good part of the Journey, the night before in extreme cold, and lodged in a place inconvenient, I being much indisposed. I mention not in these *Foundations* the great pains, and Sufferings of the Ways; for, it sometimes snowed a whole day together; sometimes I lost my way; otherwhiles had Sicknesse, and Fevers; for (God be praised) generally I have little health: but I saw plainly, that our *Lord* gave me strength, and courage. For, sometimes I have perceived my self, whilst I persued these Foundations, seized with such Pains, and Torments, that I was exceedingly distressed; and methought that

when I was alone in my *Cell*, I was never so ill, without keeping my Bed : whence I turned me to our *Lord*, passionately complaining to his *Majesty*, and expostulating, why he would have me do more, than I was able ? But afterward (though with some pain) our *Lord* gave me strength ; and with the fervour, he inspired, and solicitude, that incited me, methought I had forgot my self.

As I remember, I never omitted any *Foundation* for fear of trouble, though I had a great reluctance, and contrariety against the Journeys (long ones especially;) but, having once begun them, it seemed little ; reflecting, for whose sake it was undertaken ; and considering, that *God* in that house was to be praised, and the *B. Sacrament* to be set up. It is a singular content to me, to see one Church more, when I recount how many the *Lutherans* demolish : I know not what pains (how great soever) is to be feared, for the obtaining to *Christianity* so great a good : for, though few consider, that *Jesus Christ*, true *God*, and true *Man*, is in the most *Holy Sacrament* in divers parts of the World, as truly, as he is in Heaven, yet ought it to be an extraordinary Consolation to us all. For certain, such I many times feel in the Quire, when I see these so pure Souls employed in the praises of *God*; which I discerne also in several other things, as well of their Obedience, as of the Contentment, that I see so strict Clauſure, and Retirement affords them. But, who can expref the Joy, they feel, when any occasions of Mortification are offered, where our *Lord* beſtows greater Grace, and ſkill on the *Prioreſſes* to exercise them therein ? In these I see their greater delight : and fo it is, that the *Prioreſſes* are ſooner weary of trying them, than they of obeying ; for, their desires herein are endleſs.

It matters not, though I digreſs a little from the *Foundation* whereof I began to treat, because there occur ſome things now to me concerning *Mortifications*, which leſt they be forgotten, I will here mention ; and happily, *Daughters*, they will prove uſeful for the *Prioreſſes*. For, as there are in *Superioreſſes* diſſeſt Verties, and Giſts, they love to direct their *Nunns* the ſame way, that themſelves go. She that is very mortified thinks, that, whatever ſhe enjoyns, it is eaſie to tame, and ſubdue the will to it, as it would be to her, when yet ſometimes perhaps it would be difficult, and diſtaſtful to her ſelf alſo. We are to conider very much, that we ought not to impoſe on others, what would be painful to our ſelves. Discretion is an excellent, and important thing for governing, and in theſe caſes very neceſſary, I may ſay, more than in others, because herein the account is greater, that is to be had of thoſe under our charge, both concerning their Interior, and Exterior. Other *Prioreſſes*, that have

have much of the Spirit, would place all in making Prayer, Mental, and Vocal; in fine, our *Lord* guides Souls different ways; and the *Prioresse* ought to consider, that they are not set in that office, to chuse them a path to their mind, but to lead their Subjects in the way of their *Rule* and *Constitutions*, though they force themselves to this, and would fain do otherwise.

I was once in one of our *Monasteries* with a *Prioresse*, that was a great lover of Penance, and led all this way. There it happened, that at one and the same time, the whole *Coveny* gave themselves a Discipline of all the Seven *Penitential Psalms*, with the *Collects*, and *Prayers* belonging thereto, and the like. The same happens, if the *Prioresse* be much absorpt, and suspended in *Prayer*; for (though it be not at the usual hour of *Prayer*, but after *Matins*) she will detain all the *Community* there, when it would be much better, the *Nunns* should go to sleep. If she love *Mortifications*, she placeth all in a desire of suffering; and these poor Flocks of the *B. Virgin* are silent, like so many Lambs: which occasions in me great Devotion, and Confusion, and sometimes a strong temptation, and jealousie, concerning it; for, the *Sisters* being wholly absorpt in God, observe it not; but I am afraid for their health; and wish, they kept the *Rule*, wherein is enough to do, and what is more should be enjoyned with all sweetnes: especially this concerning Mortification is very important. For the love of our *Lord*, let the *Superioreffes* be careful herein; for, in these things, discretion is very requisite, and the knowing each ones Talent: wherein, if they proceed not with caution, in stead of helping, they will hurt, and disquiet them. They are to consider, that such Mortification is not necessary, for the Souls gaining of liberty, and high perfection; is this done in a short time: but let the *Prioresse* go by little and little helping every one according to the Talent of understanding, and Spirit, that God gives them. Perhaps they will think, that, for this, there needs no great understanding; but they are mistaken: for there will be some, who, before they come to understand what *Perfection* is (and even the *Spirit* of our *Rule*) pass much time (and happily afterward these prove the holier persons) who do not know, when it is good to excuse themselves, when not; and other pertty matters; which, possibly, if well understood, they will do with ease, and they do not come fully to understand them; nay, which is worse, it seems not to them, that they are things of perfection.

In one of these *Monasteries* is a person one of the most eminent Servants of *God* in that place, and, as far as I can conjecture, of much *Spirit*, exceedingly favoured by our *Lord*, of much *Penance*, and *Humility*; and

yet she doth not thoroughly understand some things in our *Constitutions*. The accusing of faults, in the *Chapter*, to her seemes but little Charity ; and, she saith, she apprehends not, why she should discover any thing touching her *Sisters*, or note their defects ; for, so she might tell something of a *Sister*, that is a great Servant of God ; yet in other things, the same person is seen to excell those of deep understanding. But the *Prioreſſ* must not think to know Souls presently ; let her leave that to God, for only he can do that : and let her endeavour to conduct each one that way, his *Majesty* leads her ; provided, that she fail not in *Obedience*, and in the essentials of the *Rule*, and *Constitutions*. That *Virgin* of the *Eleven Thousand*, which hid her self, was not the les *Saint*, and *Martyr*, nay peradventure suffered more, than the rest, in coming afterward single to offer her self to Martyrdome.

So that, returning to *Mortification* ; The *Prioreſſ* haply may enjoin a *Nun* something for mortifying her (which, though it be in it self inconsiderable, yet is burdensome to her) and, albeit she do it, yet she remains so disquieted, and tempted, that it had been better, not to have enjoyned her it ; as quickly may be perceived. Let the *Prioreſſ* therefore take heed, not to attempt to make her perfect by strength of arme (as they say :) but let her disguise the matter, and go on by little and little, till our Lord work in her : to the end that, what is done to further her (for perhaps, without this particular Perfection, she may be a very good *Nun*) be not a means of disturbing her, and of keeping her Spirit sad, and afflited, which is a terrible thing : and, possibly, it may fall out, that, by seeing the rest bare such a thing well, by degrees she also will do the same, with them, as hath been often seen ; and, if not, without this vertue she may be saved. For, I know one of these, who hath lived all her life very virtuously, and for many Years divers ways well served our *Lord* ; and she hath some Imperfections, and Sentiments (many times) which she cannot conquer ; and she complains of them to me, and understands them well. I conceive, God permits her to fall into these defects without sin, (which, they are exempt from) that she may humble her self, and see that he is not absolutely perfect. So that, there will be some, who will endure great Mortifications, and the greater the things enjoyned them are, the more delightful are they ; because our Lord hath already infused strength into their Souls, to submit their Wills : and others will not be able, or not know how, to bear small ones : and here it will be, as if we should load two Bushels of Corn on the Shoulders of a Child, who not only cannot carry them, but will fall to the ground therewith, and be spoiled. Wherefore, my *Daughters* (I mean the *Prioreſſes*) pardon me ; for the things, I have

have observed in some; have made me the longer, and earnestest herein.

Another thing, I would caution (and that too very important) is; that ye command nothing, though for trial of Obedience, which done, may prove a Sin, even Venial; for, I have known some, that would have been Mortal, had they been effected: Where, though the subjects may possibly, for their Innocence, and simplicity be saved, yet not therefore the *Priores*. For, these other being on the one side not instructed by any, that there are certain things, which they may not so suddenly put in execution; and, on the other, hearing, and reading the extraordinary things, done by the Saints of the *Desert*, all seems well done, that is enjoyed them, at least, for their doing thereof.

Inferiors are likewise to know, that that, which would be a Mortal Sin, if not enjoyed, they may no more do it, being enjoyed; provided, it be not omitting *Mass*, or the *Church-Fasts*, and the like; because the *Priores* may have good grounds for enjoying these; and they in obeying would be excused; as, for example, in case of Sickness. But, some other things, as to throw ones self into a Well, and the like, would be Extrours, and Sotiness; because none ought to expect God should do Miracles here, as he did with the Saints. There are things enough, wherein to exercise perfect Obedience; all, that is exempt from such danger [of Venial, or Mortal Sin] I commend. So, a Sister in *Malagon* asked leave to Discipline her self; the *Priores*, because others would have intreated to have done the same, bid her, *Be gone, and let me alone*: but, she importuning her, she replies, *Go, walk, trouble not my head*: The Nun in great simplicity went, and walked some hours in a certain place; till, spied casually by another Sister, who asked her, why she walked so? or the like; she answered, she was commanded it. Mean-while, it Rung to *Matins*; and, the *Priores* asked afterward, why that Sister was absent, the other, that saw her, informed her of what passed. So that, it is necessary, as else-where I have said, the *Priores* should be careful in considering how they proceed with some Souls, which they already know to be so very obedient. Another went to shew the *Priores* a certain very great Worm, bidding her, look what a fair one it was; the *Priores*, jesting, bid her, dres it, and eat it: she went and fried it well: the Cook asked her, why she fried it? She answered, to eat it; and so she had, but that she was hindred: and, the *Priores* not heeding, it might have done her much-hurt. Notwithstanding all this, in this point of *Obedience*, I am content, they do something more than ordinary, because I have a particular devotion to this

This Virtue : whence I have endeavoured, what I could, that the *Sisters* might attain it ; but, little had this availed me, had not our *Lord*, of his mercy, given them the grace, to be all of them generally affected, and inclined hereto. His *Divine Majesty* grant, it may increase in them more and more.

CHAP. XXIII.

She proceeds in the Foundation of the Monastery of S. Joseph in the City of Salamanca.

I Have digressed very much : for, when any thing presents it self to me, which our *Lord* would have me by experience to understand, it troubles me not to mention it : it may be, that what I thus think of, may be good, and profitable. Consult always Learned persons, my *Daughters* ; for so ye will find the way to *Perfection* with discretion, and Truth. Hereof the *Prioresse*s have great need, if they would discharge their Office well, and must confess to Persons Learned, otherwise they will commit gross ever-sights, thinking it Sanctity : So likewise should they procure, that their *Nuns* confess to men of Learning.

We came then (as I said) to *Salamanca* the *Vigil* of *All-Saints*, the year afore mentioned, about Noon. Presently at my Lodging I endeavoured to hearken out a man of that City, to whom I had written, and recommended the getting me the House cleared, called *Nicolas Gutierrez*, a great Servant of *God*, who by his good Life had obtained of the *Divine Majesty* a wonderful peace, and contentment in the many troubles, which he suffered, and after having lived in great prosperity grew very poor, though still as cheerful, as when he was rich. This good man took much pains about this *Foundation*, with great devotion, and hearty affection. When he came, he told me, the House was not empty, because he was not able to conclude with, the *Students* so, as to be gone. I told him, how much it concerned, they should surrender it to us speedily, before it were noised, that I was come to Town ; for, I ever feared the intervening of some Impediment. He pursued it so close, that that very Evening they quitted it ; so, about Night we went thither. This was the first *House*, that I Founded, without placing the *B. Sacrament* therein ; conceiving, that possession was not taken, when it was not set up ; but I understood

understood, that this was not necessary, which was a great Consolation to me, having no time to make ready the Church : for, the Students little regarding Cleanliness, and Neatness, left the House in such a case, as cost no small trouble that Night to cleane it.

The next day betimes in the Morning was said the first *Mass*; and I procured, that some more *Nuns* should be sent for, which were to come from *Medina del Campo*. I and my Companion staid there alone on *All-Saints* Night. I tell you, *Sisters*, when I remember the fear, of my Companion, which was *Maria de Sacramento*, a *Nunn* elder than I, and a great Servant of God, I have a good mind to laugh. The House was very large, and confused, with many void spaces, and vacuities between the Roof of the House, and of the Chambers ; and the *Scholars* could not be put out of her mind ; for, she thought, because they were so unwilling to leave the house, some of them might be hid in it ; which they might have been very conveniently, not wanting a fit place. We shut our selves up in a Room, where there was Straw (which was the first kind of Furniture I provided, when I Founded Monasteries ; for, having this, I reckoned I had Beds) and that Night the *Fathers* of the Society of *Jesus* lent us two Coverlets. The next day some *Nunns*, that lived near us (whom we thought thereupon to have been displeased) lent us Coverlets, and other Furniture for our Companions, that were to come, and sent us Alms ; they were called the *Nuns* of *S. Isabella* ; and, all the time, we staid in the House, they shewed us great kindness. When my Companion saw her self inclosed in that room, she seemed somewhat better satisfied concerning the *Schollars* ; yet she did nothing but look, one while on this side, another while on that, with great fear : the Devil certainly endeavouring to represent to her apprehensions of danger, to disquiet me ; for, by reason of Sicknes, and a Weaknes at my Heart, which I feel, a small matter serves thereto. I asked her, what she looked at so, since none could come thither ? She answered, *I am thinking, if I should now dye here, whas would your Reverence do alone ?* Indeed, if such a thing should have happened, it would have seemed to me a hard case. So she made me stand musing a while hereupon, and likewise a little afraid ; for, dead bodies, though I feare them not, always cause a pain at my heart, even when I am not present there. And, the general Ringing of Bells then furthering it, for (as I said) it was the Night before *All-Souls* Day, the Devil took a fit occasion to make us lose our thoughts in Trifles, and Fopperies : when he perceives, that we have no fear of him, he finds out other devices. So, I answered her, *Sister, when this happens, then I will consider, what I am to do : at present let me sleep.*

Sleep. So, having had two bad Nights, Sleep soon expelled our fears. Next day came other *Nunns*, whereupon our fears utterly vanished.

The *Monastery* continued in that House some three Years (I am not sure, whether it were not four, because I remember it not justly) and I after some time was commanded to return to the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation of Avila*: for, by my good will, I would never have left any *Monastery*, till the *Nunns* were provided of a House of their own, well accommodated, and with *Clausure*, as hitherto I have done. For, herein God hath favoured me greatly, that in Labours I delighted to be the first, and procured every thing, that conduced to their quiet, and settlement, even to very small matters, as if all my life were to be spent in that *Monastery*: and so I rejoiced exceedingly, when they were well accommodated. I was extreamlly troubled at what the *Sisters* endured here, not that they wanted maintenance (for, this I provided from the place, where I lived, though the *Monastery* was very far distant, and out of the way for procuring of Alms) but, because the House was unhealthy, by reason of the great moisture, and cold there; and, being so very large, it could not be remedied; and, which was worse, they had not the *Blessed Sacrament*; which, to Women of so strict *Clausure*, and Solitude, was a great affliction. They did not much apprehend them; but endured all with a delight, they took, to praise our Lord for it: some of them told me, they counted it an Imperfection in them to desire another House, since they were very well contented here, had they but had the *B. Sacrament*.

Afterward, the Superior [Peter Fernandez Commissary Apostolical for visiting the Order of the Carmelites] seeing their perfection, and the misery, they endured, moved with Compassion, commended me to return thither, from the *Incarnation*. They had already agreed with a Gentleman of the City, [Peter Bandinus] to furnish them with an house; but it was so incommodious, that, to make it fit to dwell in, and to shape it to the Form of a *Monastery*, would cost above two thousand Crowns. It was the house of a *Majarsco*; and he agreed with us to let us go to it, though the grants were not then obtained of the King; promising, he would get it, and that in the mean time we might repair it, and raise the Walls. I desired to go, and see it, that I might know how to order what was to be done; for, Experience had made me skilful in such things. So I got Father Julian d' *Avila* to accompany me, who was content to go with me in these Foundations. We went away in *August*, and, making all the hast possible, were detained there till *Michaelmas*, when usually they

they let houses : and, for all this excessive pains taken, it wanted still much of being made commodious ; but, we having not engaged for the Rent of the Year ensuing, for the house where we lived, it was already let to another, who earnestly pressed us to be gone. The *Church* was almost finished, and ready ; the Gentleman that sold us the house was absent, and some that wished us well told us, we did ill to go thither so soon : but, where there is necessity, Advice is hardly taken, unless this be remedied.

We went to this House on *S. Michaels Eve*, a little before day ; and already it was divulged, that on *S. Michaels day* the *B. Sacrament* was to be set up, and a Sermon to be there. It pleased God, that that very day we went, toward Evening it rained so, that it was a great trouble to us to remove those things, we needed, to another Houle. The *Chapel* of the *Church*, which was new built, was so ill Tiled, that it rained almost every where. I tell you, *Daughters*, that that day I found my self very imperfect ; for, the former report being spread abroad, I knew not what to do, but lament ; and turning me to our Lord, as it were bemoaning my self to him, I desired, *That either he would not command me to undertake such imployments, or afford some remedy in this necessity*. The good man *Nicholas Gutierrez* with his wonted Chearfulness, as though it were nothing, wished me with great Calmnes, not to torment my self ; for, God would remedy all : and so he did ; for on *S. Michaels day* in the Morning, when the people came, it began to be fair, which caused in me great devotion ; and I perceived, how much better that blessed man had done, by trusting in our *Lord* ; than I, by vexing my self.

There was a great concourse of people, and excellent *Musick*, and the *B. Sacrament* very solemnly set up ; and, the house standing in a good place, the *Monasifry* thereupon began to be more noted, and people had more devotion to it : in particular the *Councts* of *Mount-Royal*. *Donna Maria Pimentel*, and another *Lady* the *Gouvernor* of the Towns Wife, named *Donna Mariana* alisted us. Presently next day, to allay our joy for having the *B. Sacrament*, came the Gentleman, that owed the house, so incensed, that I knew not how to deal with him ; and the Devil, so bestirred him in it, that he was satisfied with reason ; for, we had performed all, that was agreed on ; and the telling him so prevailed nothing ; though some persons interceding somewhat pacified him, but afterward he returned to his former fury, and changed his mind ; so that now I was resolved to quit the house. But neither was he content with this, nor with any thing else, but that the price thereof should be pre-

sently paid him. His Wife, whose indeed the House was, desired to sell it, to raise portions for two Daughters ; and, upon this ground, a Licence was requested from the King, and the Money [till that procured] already deposited in the hands of one, whom he chose. The busines is ; that, though it be above three Years since, the purchase is not yet concluded ; nor do I know, whether the *Monastery* will continue here (I mean in this house) for, to this end I have related it, or what will be the Issue, or conclusion of this busines. This I know sufficiently, that in no other *Monastery*, of all, that our Lord hath Founded of this first *Rule*, the *Nuns* have undergone so great troubles ; but they, that are there, through Gods mercy are so good, that they endure all with chearfulness. His *Divine Majesty* grant, they may proceed from good to better ; for, to have, or not have, a good house, imports little : rather it is a delight to us, to see our selves in a house, out of which we may be suddenly ejected ; remembiring, that the *Lord of the World* had none. The same, of not having, nor living in a house of our own, hath befallen us several times, as in these *Foundations* is seen : and it is true, that I never saw a *Nun* of ours troubled at it. His *Divine Majesty* grant, that we fail not of enjoying the Mansions eternal, through his Infinite goodness, and mercy. •

C H A P. XXIV.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery of Alva.

IT was not full two Months after I hired the house at *Salamanca*, when on *All-Saints* day I was importuned in behalf of the *Auditor* of the *Duke of Alva*, and his Wife, to Erect a *Monastery*, and *Covent* in that Place. I had no great Inclination, because this being a small Town, it must have Rent ; and my desire was, that none of our *Monasteries* should have so. It hapned, that Father *Dominicus Bannez*, who was my *Confessor*, and of whom I spake in the beginning of the *Foundations*, was then at *Salamanca*, and chid me, saying, that the *Council of Trent* granting leave to admit revenue, it were not well, for this, to omit the Founding of a *Monastery* ; that I, understood not the busines ; for, this hindred not the *Nunn's* professing Poverty, and high Perfection.

Before I proceed to other things, I will declare, who Founded this House.

House, and how our Lord inspired her to Found it. The Foundress of the Monastery of our Lady of the Annunciation at *Alva de Tormes* was *Teresa de Layz*, the Daughter of a Father, and Mother both Noble, Honourable, and of ancient Extraction : their Wealth not bearing proportion to the greatness of their House, they dwelt in a Town called *Tordigllos*, distant from *Alva* above mentioned six Miles. Great pity, certainly ! that the things of this World should be liable to so great vanity, as that men had rather suffer solitude and the want, endured in those petty Villages, both of teaching, and many things besides, which are the proper means of enlightening Souls, than recede a jot from their punctilios of Honour, as they term it, which carries with it such a misery. Now, her Father and Mother having four Daughters, when *Teresa de Layz* was born, they were exceedingly troubled thereat, seeing this Child proved a Daughter too. A thing indeed to be lamented ; that men, not knowing what is best for them (as not fully understanding Gods Judgments, nor considering the great advantages, that may come by Daughters, the great mischiefs by Sons) should seem unwilling to leave it to him, who understands, and creates all ; but torment, and kill themselves for that, which they should extreamly rejoice at ; and, like people, whose Faith is a sleep, advance not forward with consideration, nor remember, that it is God, who disposeth, and ordereth this matter ; neither do leave all in his hands ; and, being already so blind, as not to do this, it is gross Ignorance besides, not to discern, how little such vexing avails them. Good God ! how far differently shall we understand these our present Ignorances in the day of Judgment, when the truth of all these things shall be known, and how many Fathers, and Mothers shall see themselves thrown down to Hell, by having Sons ; and how many likewise shall see themselves, by means of their Daughters, exalted to Heaven !

Returning now to what I was saying ; to this pass things came ; that, little valuing the life of the Infant, being but three days old, they left her alone, not regarding from Morning to Evening, nor heeded by any. Herein they had done well ; that they had gotten a Priest to Baptize her presently after she was born : but, when evening came, a certain Woman, that took some care of her, and knew what had passed, ran to look if she were dead, and with her some others, who came to visit the Mother, and afterward witnessed what I shall now relate. The Nurse took the Child in her arms, and bemoaning it said to her, *What, my pretty Babe, art thou not a Christian ?* As it were complaining of the cruelty, the Parents had shown to it. The Child lift up its head, and answered, *Yes, that I am*.

am : And spake no more till the time, that other Children begin to speak. All, that heard it, were astonished ; and from that time the Mother began to love it, and take great care of, and to affect it ; so that she often said, she wished to live, till she saw, how God would dispose of that Child : whom she educated very well, and instructed in all kind of Virtue.

The time for Marrying her being come, she was unwilling to enter upon that state : but understanding, that *Francis Velasquez* was a Sutor to her (who likewise, as her Confort, is *Co-Founder* of this House) she presently resolved to accept him for her Husband, if her Parents motioned it to her, without having ever seen him before in her life. But our Lord say it fit so, for effecting this good work, which both of them have done for the serving his *Divine Majesty*. For, besides his being rich, and virtuous, he so loves his Wife, that in every thing he pleaseth her, and justly ; for, our Lord hath given him in her, all, that can, or should be desired in a married Woman ; since that, together with the great care, and forecast, she takes for her family, she is very chaste and virtuous ; in such wise, that, her Husband having brought her to *Alv*, where he was born, and it happening, that the *Duke's* Officers had assigned a Lodging in her house to a young *Gentleman* ; she took great offence thereat, and began to retire her self, avoiding all converse, and society with those Persons. But the Devil (in regard she was yong, and very beautiful) that she might not be, or not be esteemed by others, so virtuous, and honest, began to suggest lewd purposes to her yong Guest ; that, had she not been so very circumspect, and chaste, as indeed she was, there might have followed some scandal, and disorder. Whereupon she, perceiving it, without telling her Husband any thing hereof, earnestly requested him, to remove her from that place ; which he soon did, carrying her to *Salamanca*, where they lived very contented, and rich, *Francis Velasquez* being possessed of a beneficial, and honourable Imployment there ; by reason of which all studied to please him, and courted him much. Only it grieved them, that our *Lord* gave them no Son ; and, that he would bestow one on them, great were the Devotions, and Prayers, she made ; nor did she ever request any thing else, but that our *Lord* wold grant her Issue ; that, when she died, might praise his *Divine Majesty* ; it seeming to her a hard case, that her Family shoulde cease in her ; and, after her life ended, there shoulde be none to praise *God* in her name : and she told me, that she never had any other end in desiring them. And the is to be credited, because she is a Woman of great veracity, and so good a Christian, and Virtuous, that she many times incites me to praise *God* in beholding

his

his works, and a Soul so desirous of continually pleasing him, and who never ceaseth to spend her time in good things.

So, passing many Years with this desire, recommend her self to the Glorious *Apostle, S. Andrew*, who (they told her) was a good Advocate for obtaining what she desired in this particular: after many Prayers made, as she lay in her Bed one Night, she heard a voyce, that bid her, *Do not desire Children; for, you will condemn your self for it.* She was much amazed, and affrighted at these words; but did not thereupon leave wishing them; conceiving, that her end being so very good, why should she condemn her self for it? And so she continued still requesting of our Lord this Blessing, praying for it with particular Devotions to *S. Andrew*. Being one time in this longing desire (whether awake, or asleep, she is not sure; but, be it, as it may, she understood, by the event, the vision was good) she thought, she was in a House, where, in a Court under a Gallery was a Well, and on the side of it a Meadow, full of white flowers, so exceeding beautiful, as she never saw the like, nor was able to express. Near the Well appeared *S. Andrew* in a very beautiful, and venerable Form, who said to her: *These are Othergates Children, than those, you desire.* She was unwilling, the consolation, she took therein, should ever have ended, yet it lasted but a while. She understood plainly, that it was *S. Andrew*, without any ones telling her; and that it was the will of God, a *Monastery* should be built there, whereby is evident, that the *Vision* was as well Intellectual, as Imaginary; and that there can be no mistake, nor Illusions of the Devil therein.

First, there was no mistake, since it produced a good effect; for, from that instant she never more desired Children; but it remained so imprinted on her heart, that that was Gods will, that she no more prayed for, nor wished, Children; and so began to consider, what course she should take to execute the will of God. And, that it was no illusion of the Devil, is manifest likewise, by the effect, that followed thereon; since that, which comes from him, can produce no good, such, as this; that already a *Monastery* is Founded, where God is so well served: besides that this hapned above six Years before the *Monastery* was Erected; whereas the Devil cannot know things to come. Being therefore much strook with this *Vision*, she spake to her Husband, that, since it pleased God to give them no Children, they shoud with their Wealth build a *Monastery*, for *Nuns*. He, being so very good, and loving her so dearly liked it well, and they began to deliberate, where it should be: she had a mind to the place where she was born, but her Husband alleged many

many reasonable, and just Impediments, whereby she was convinced, it would not do well there. Whilst this was in agitation, the Duchess of Alva sent to speak with Francis Velasquez; and, when he came, she willed him to return to Alva, and dwell there, for the managing an Office, and Employment, which she bestowed on him in her Court, and he accepted, though less beneficial, than that, he had in Salamanca. His Wife, when she heard it, was much troubled at it; for (as was said) she abhorred the place; but, being assured, that she should have no more Lodgers put upon her, was somewhat pacified, yet sorry notwithstanding, as chusing rather to live at Salamanca.

Francis soon got a house, and sent for his Wife; who came much discontented, and more, when she saw the house; for, it had but little store of Lodging, though a fair, and large Seat; so that she was greatly disquieted all that night. The next Morning, when she came into the Court, she saw at the side of it a Well, and straight called to mind, that it was just the same, with every thing else, neither more, nor less, which she saw, when S. Andrew appeared to her; she saw, I say, the place, not the Saint, nor the Meadow, nor the Flowers; though she both had and still hath them imprinted in her Imagination. As soon as she saw it, she was troubled, and purposed to build a Monastery there, and from that time was very well contented to live at Alva, and resolved not to remove thence: Whereupon, they began to buy some houses adjoining, till they had room enough to do what they had a mind. She was very solicitous in thinking, what Order to haye it of; for she desired the Nuns should be few, and very strict: when, communicating her intention to two Religious men of several Orders, very Virtuous, and Learned, they both told her, it would be better to undertake some other pious Work; for, Nuns for the most part lived discontented, and divers other things they alledged, all extravagant: because the Devil, disliking it, sought to hinder, and disturb this busyness of the Monastery, by setting a fair gloss on the reasons, that these Religious men produced; and they, so earnestly persuading that it was not convenient, and the Devil, who interposed himself, busie to disturb her, made her afraid, troubled, and in conclusion to change her mind, resolving not to do it; and so she told her Husband; it seeming to them, that, seeing such persons said, it was not good, and their Intention was to do something acceptable to God, they might safely desist from their first designe. So they agreed to give for a Wife to her Nephew, her Sisters Son, one whom she dearly loved, a Niece of her Husbands; and so bestowing on these the greatest part of their Estate, with the rest to provid the best they could for their own

Souls:

souls: this her *Nephew* being very virtuous, and very young. In this resolution they both continued very firm, constant; and fully satisfied. But, our Lord having otherwise appointed, this their agreement availed little; for, scarce a fortnight was passed after this accord, when such a violent fever seized the young man, that in very few daies our *Lord* took him to himself. She was extream sad thereat, and terrified, imputing the cause of his death to that determination, she made, of omitting that, which *God* would have had done, for the enriching of a *Nephew*: remembraunce what befell the *Prophet Jonas*, for not obeying *God*; so, it seemed, *God* had punished her, taking from her that *Nephew*, she so tenderly loved. From that day forward she resolved in good earnest, not to desist, for any thing, from pursuing this *Foundation*. The same resolution made her husband, though how to putt it in execution they knew not: for, it seems *God* infused then into her mind that which is now effected; but they, to whom shee related, and described, how she would have the *Monastery* to be, laughed at her; conceiving, she would never get those things, she desired: he that most discouraged her was a *Franciscan Father*, her *Confessor*, a learned, and eminent person, who afflicted her much.

About that time it fell out, that this *Religious* man went to some place, where he had notice of these *Monasteries* of our *Lady of Mount Carmel*, which were then sounding: he informing himself well concerning them, at his return told her, he had now discovered, how she might erect a *Monastery* after that fashion, she had mentioned, and desired, recounting to her what had passed, and wishing her to treat the busynesse with me; as she did. There hapned a great deal of trouble in according; for, I have always laboured, that the *Monasteries* by me founded with rent should have competent maintenance, that the *Nuns* might not be necessitated to run to their kindred, nor to any else: but that all necessaries for Diet, and Cloathes should be provided them, and given them by the *Monastery*; and that the sick, and infirm should be well looked to, and governed; for, from their want of necessaries, grow many inconveniences. And to the erecting many *Monasteries* in poverty, without revenue, I never wanted courage, and confidence with assurance, that *God* will never fail them; whereas, to erect them with revenue, (and that but small) every thing failes me; and therefore I hold it better, not to found them. At length they yielded to reason, assigning a competent revenue for the number appointed: and, which I esteemed highly of, they quitted their own house, to bestow it on us, and went to another very inconvenient. The *B. Sacrament* was set

up, and the *Foundation* finished the day of *S. Paul's Conversion*, in the year 1571, to the honour, and glory of God; where in my opinion, his *Divine Majesty* is greatly served. He vouchsafe to advance it more, and more.

I had begun to declare some particulars of certain *Sisters* of these *Monasteries*, conceiving, that, when these came to be read, those now in being, whereof I make mention, would not be living; and that those who come after may be encouraged to carry on so good beginnings: but afterward, methought there would not want some, to relate them better, and more particularly; and without servile fear, I have, imagining, that they will judge me a party; and therefore I have omitted divers things, which he, that hath seen, and known, cannot chuse, but think to be miraculous, because they are supernatural: But of these I had no mind to relate any; nor yet of those, which it is apparent, our *Lord* hath done upon their prayers. In reckoning the years, wherein the *Foundations* were made, I suspect some mistake, though I have used all possible diligence therein; for, as I remember them (which imports not much, because this may be corrected afterward) I mention them, according to my best observance: and, if there be any error, the difference will be but small.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery of Segovia.

I Have already declared, how, after founding the *Monastery* of *Salamanca*, and that of *Alva*; and before that of *Salamanca*, had any house of their own, I was commanded by Father *Fr. Peter Fernandez*, at that time *Commissary Apostolick*, to go for three yeares to the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation* at *Avila*; and how (perceiving the necessity of the *Monastery* at *Salamanca*) he enjoined me to return thither, that, a house of their own being bought for them, the *Nuns* might remove into it. Being there one day in prayer, our *Lord* bade me go found a house at *Segovia*. Methought it was impossible; because I might not go from hence without a command and I knew, that Father *Fr. Peter Fernandez Commissary Apostolick*, had no mind I should found any more: I saw likewise, that, the three yeares, I was to spend in governing that of the *Incarnation*, being not yet expired, he had reason for not granting me this Licence. Being solicitous herein, our *Lord* bade me

me ask his licence; for, he would give it me. He was then at Salamanca, and I writ to him, that since he knew, I was under a command from our Father Generall, that when ever an opportunity presented it self, for founding in any place, I should not let it slip; and that now at Segovia a fit occasion offered it self, the City and the Bishop having consented to the erecting one of these Monasteries; if his Reverence pleased to command it, I would found it; which I signified to him, for discharging my conscience, and shouldest rest very well contented, and satisfied with what ever he shouldest enjoine (I think these were the words, somwhat more or les) and that I conceived, it would be a service to Almighty God. It plainly appeared, that it was our Lords pleasure, because he presently answered me, that I should go about it; and sent me a licence; at which I much wondred, considering what I had formerly known by him in the like case. From Salamanca I procured a house to be hired; for I had learnt by the Foundations of Toledo, and Valladolid, that it was better to look out a house of their own for them after possession was taken, for many reasons. The chief, because I had not as yet a farthing to purchase one; and, after possession already taken, our Lord soon provided us; and so I had also time to choose a more convenient seat. There lived here a Lady, a Widow, who had been wife to a Majorasco, her name was *Donna Anna de Ximena*: she came once to see mee at Avila, and was a great servant of God, and her vocation had always been to become a Nun: so, in the erecting of this Monastery, she was admitted with a Daughter of hers, one of a very good life: and, for the troubles she had suffered, both Wife, and Widow, our Lord gave her a double content in seeing her selfe now entred into Religion. They had always been, both Mother and Daughter, persons very retired, and eminent Servants of God.

This good Lady hired a House, and furnished us with all that, she knew we needed, both for the Church, and our selves: this I sufficiently experienced, for I had little trouble herein. But, that there might be no Foundation without some affliction, besides that I went thither with a strong feaver, and no stomack, with severall inward maladies of aridity, and strange darknesse in my soul, as likewise diverse sorts of corporal distempers; for the violence of these had held me three months; and, for that half year, that I staid there, I was continually sick; this also hapned, which I shall now relate. I had leave of the Bishop [Didacus de Covarravias] and the City, to found, but would not enter in sive privatly by night, on the Vigil of S. Joseph, and the next day, being that Saint's Festivall, we set up the B. Sacrament. It was a pretty while since that

I had this leave; but, living in the *Monastery* of the *Incarnation*, and having another Superior besides our most Reverend Father General, [Peter Fernandez] I could not found [without his licence also]. I had likewise the *Bishop's* leave (resident there when the City requested it of him) only by word of mouth, which he gave to a Gentleman called *Andrew de Ximena*, who procured it for us, not troubling himself to get it in writing; nor did I think it necessary; but I was deceived: for, his *Vicar*, who was not acquainted therewith, understanding, that a *Monastery* was made there, came straight that very morning, exceeding angry, and forbade *Mass* to be said any more, and would have imprisoned him that said it, who was a *Discalced Friar*, Father *John della Croce*, who came with Father *Julian a' Avila*, and another Servant of *God*, that likewise accompanied me, named *Antonio Gaitano*. This was a Gentleman of *Alva*, whom our *Lord* had called, having been many years immersed in secular affairs, which he afterward so trampled underfoot; and despised, that he minded nothing but how to serve *God* best. Because in the *Foundations* that follow, mention will be made of him, he having greatly assisted me, and laboured much, I have only spoken at present, who he his; for, should I recount his vertnes, I should not end so soon. The vertue that made most to our purpose was his being so extremly mortified, that there was never a Servitor of all that came with us, that took so much pains, where need was, as he. He is a man of much prayer, and our *Lord* hath done him so great favour, that all that which to others seemis difficult, and causeth regret; delights him, and to him is easy: so is all the pains taken in these *Foundations*; for it appeares evidently, that *God* selected both him, and Father *Julian de Avila* for this Purpose; though Father *Julian* began before, at the very first *Monastery*. I believe, that, for so good company's sake, our *Lord* made every thing prosper with me. Their discoufe in travelling was always about divine matters, to instruct them, that accompanied, or met, us: so that, on all occasions, they served his *Divine Majesty*.

It is fit, my *Daughters*, that, when ye read these *Foundations*, ye understand, how much we are obliged to them, that (they having without any private interest taken so much pains for the good, you enjoy, of being in these *Monasteries*) ye may recommend them to *God*, and they may reap some benefit from your prayers: for, certainly, if ye considered well the tedious nights, and days, they endured, and their pains in travelling, you would do it very willingly.

The *Vicar* would not go from our *Chrch* without Leaving an Officer

Officer at the gate ; I know not to what end : it served to frighten a little those, that were by. For, nothing troubled me, that hapned after taking possession : all my fears were before. I sent to call certain persons, akin to one of my companions, whom I had brought, being of the best rank, in that place, that they might speak to the *Vicar*, and acquaint him, that I had the *Bishops* leave. He knew it very well, as he afterward acknowledged ; but he would have had us given him an account thereof ; and I conceive that so it had been worse. In conclusion, they made this agreement with him, that he should permit the *Monastery*, but that the *B. Sacrament* should not be kept there. Which at present troubled us not much ; and thus we continued some Months, till a House was bought, and with it severall suits : we had had Long debate with the *Franciscan Fathers* abought a House adjoining that was purchased ; and for this other, with those *de La Merced*, and with the *Chapter*, who had a rent upon it. *O Jesus*, what a vexation it is, to contest with varying judgments ! When it seemed quite ended, it began anew ; because the giving them what they asked, sufficed not ; for presently sprung up some other obstacle ; which in the relating seems nothing, but, in the enduring it, was a great matter. A *Nephew* of the *Bishops* did all he could for us, being *Prior*, and *Canon* of that *Church* ; and also *Herrera a Licentiate*, a great Servant of God. At last a conclusion was made with the *Chapter*, by giving them a good sum of Mony : we continued in suit with the *Fathers de La Merced*, so that, in going to the new house, we were to pass very privatly : when they saw us there (for we went a day, or two before *Michaelmas*) they were content to compound with us for mony. The greatest affliction, that these intrigues put me to, was, that I wanted not above Seven, or Eight days of finishing the three yeares of my office of *Priores* in the *Incarnation*, and this time expired, was necessarily to be there. Our Lord was pleased, that all things were composed so well, that no difference remained ; and two or three days after I went to the *Incarnation*. His most holy Name be for ever blessed, who hath continually done me so great favours : and let all his Creatures praise him. Amen.

CHAP XXVI.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery in Veas.

When (as I said) I was commanded to go from the *Incarnation* to *Salamanca*, being there then, a Messenger came on purpose from *Veas* with letters directed to me from a Gentlewoman of that place, and the *Curate* of the Town, and some others, requesting me to come and found a *Monastery* there; for, they had a house for it already, and nothing wanted, but my coming thither. I enquired of the Messenger, who reported very well of the country, and justly; for, it is very pleasant, and of a good aire: but, considering the great distance, and tedious journey, that was from *Salamanca* to *Veas*, it seemed an improper businesse; especially seeing it must be done with the *Apostolick Commissary's* command, who was an enemy, at least, no friend, to the founding *Monasteries*. So I purposed to answer, that I could not do it, without saying any thing else: afterward, methought, *Father Commissary* being then at *Salamanca*, it would not be well, to do thus without his advice, by reason of the injunction, laid on me by our most *Reverend Father Generall*, not to leave founding. When he saw the letters, he sent to tell me, that he thought it not fit to discourage them, with whose devotion he was much edified; that I should answer them, that so soon as they could get leave from the *Council of the Orders* (because the place belonged to a *Commandam of S. James*) I should be ready to found it; but that I might be confident they would not be able to get it; for, he knew of severall persons, that in divers years could not obtain from the same *Commandators* the like faculties; in fine, that I should not return them an ill answer. I sometimes think on this, and how when our Lord wills a thing, though we intend it not, it comes to pass, that without our minding, and perceiving it, we prove the instruments therof; as here *Father Peter Fernandez* the *Commissary* was: whereupon, when they had got this leave, he could not deny it; but it was effected in this wise.

This *Monastery* of the Glorious *S. Joseph* in the town of *Veas* was founded on *S. Matthias's* day in the year 1573. the beginning whereof was on this manner following, to the honour, and glory of God. There lived in this Town a Gentleman called *Sancio Rodriguez de Sandoval*,

dread, of noble extract, and abounding in temporal wealth, having to his wife a Gentlewoman, named *Donna Catharina Godinez*: among other Children, which our Lord gave them, were two Daughters, who were afterward the *Foundresses* of this *Monastery*. The Elder was called *Donna Catharina Godinez*; the yonger *Donna Maria de Sandoval*. The Elder was fourteen yeares old, when our *Lord* called her to his service, till which age she was very far from abandoning the world, nay, she set so great a value on her self, that when her Father, intending to marry her, proffered her any match, she thought every one too mean and low for her. She, being one day in a chamber, within her Father's (who was not risen out of bed) casually happened to read on the *Crucifix*, that was there, the *Title of the Cross*; and, in reading it, presently our *Lord* totally changed her. She had been thinking but a little before on a Match, proposed to her, but too good for her, and said to her self; *What a small master contents my Father, who conceives it enough, if I marry but a Majorasco!* wheras I intend, the honour of my family shall begin in me. She had no inclination to marry, as judging it a base, and low thing to be subject to any; nor did she discern whence this her pride arose. Well knows our *Lord*, what means to cure us by: eternally blessed be his mercy. Having read the *Title*, she seemed to have received great light in her Soul to understand the truth; as if the Sun should shine into a dark room: and with this light she fixed her eyes on our *Lord* hanging on the *Cross*, shedding his blood; and considered, how ill treated he was, and his stupendious humility: on the contrary, what a different course she took, going by the way of pride. Hereon she employed her thoughts some space, our *Lord* holding her in a rapt, or suspension, wherein his *Majesty* gave her a clear knowledge of her own misery, and baseness, and a mind, that even all others should know it. She was taken with such an ardent desire of suffering for *God*, that she wished, she might undergo even what the *Martyrs* endured: and likewise with such a profound abasement of humility, and detestation of her self, that if it might have been without offending *God*, she could have been content, to have been esteemed a debauched and infamous Woman, that all might abhor her: and hereupon she began to contemn her self, enflamed with a desire of doing penance, which afterward she really put in execution. There immediately she made a vow of *Chastity*, and *Poverty*, and was so desirous to be subjected to anothers will, that, meerly for this, she would have been glad to have been transported, and lived a slave in the *Country* of the *Moors*.

All these Vertues lasted in her, so that it plainly appeared to be a Super-

Super naturall favour of our *Lord* as hereafter shall be declared, to the end all may praise him. Blessed be thou for ever, *O my God*, to all eternity, who in an instant destroyest a Soul, and again re-makest it. What is this, *O Lord*? I would ask here that, which the *Apostles* demanded, when thou healedst the Blind man, questioning, whether his parents, or he, had sinned: so I ask; Who merited so Sovereign a grace? Not she; for, it is already shewn, what kind of thoughts you drew her out of when you so dissolved her. O how great are your judgments, *Lord*! You know what you do; and I know not what I say: for your works and judgments are incomprehensible. Be you eternally glorified, who can do greater things; else what would become of me? But, had not her mother peradventure some share herein? since she was so good a Christian, that it may be your *Majesty* (as very kind) did think meet, that in her life time, she should see as eminent vertue in her Daughters. Somtimes I consider, that you bestow the like favours on those that love you; and are so abundantly kind to them, as to give them also wherewith to serve you.

Whilst she was musing hereon, so great a noise was heard over the Chamber where she was, as if it had fallen quite down; and it seemed, that it came from that corner of the room, where she her self was, and heard there certain huge roarings, and yells, that lasted for some time. So that her Father, who was in the other room adjoyning, and (as I said) was not risen out of bed, being extreamly terrified therewith, began to tremble, and distractedly straight threw his Night-gown about him, and taking his Sword, went in thither to his Daughter, and looking Pale upon it asked her, what was the matter. She answere, she saw nothing; and, looking also into another room behind this, when he espied nothing, he bid her go to her Mother; and charged his Wife not to let his Daughter be alone, telling her what he had heard. Hereby sufficiently appears, how much displeased the Devil is to have a soul taken from him, which he accounts as gained, and his own: but, he being such an enemy of our good, I wonder not, that seeing the mercifull *Lord* to bestow so many favours together, he was much affraid, and for rage, made so great a shew of his resentment thereof in particular; for, he knew, that by the Treasure, which was in that soul, he should consequently lose several other Souls, which he reckoned his: for, I take for granted, that our *Lord* never confers so eminent favours, without imparting some share, and benefit thereof on more, than that party to whom they are done. She at no time spoke hereof, but continued exceedingly desirous of entring into some Order, and with much importuni-

ty requested it along time of her parents, who would never consent thereto.

At last at the end of three years, after her earnestly intreating it, when she saw, she could not obtain it, one day, being *S. Josephs* festival, she put her self in a plain, and modest habit, acquainting only her mother therewith, (whom she could easily have prevailed with, to let her become *Religious*) but durst not mention it to her Father, and so thus dress went to *Church*; that, being once seen in this attire by people abroad, her parents might not afterward take it from her, or forbid it her, though she in the sequel endured enough. During these three yeares, she every day kept her Hours of prayer, and mortified her self what she could, as our *Lord* directed her. She went often into a Yard belonging to the house, and there washed her face, exposing it afterward to the Sun, to disfigure her self, that none might desire her in Marriage; for, they very much importuned her to marry. She was so averse from seeking to command any one, though she had the charge and government of the house, that after she commanding some things to the maids (for she could do no less) she watched till they were asleep to kiss their feet; as troubled, that they should serve her, being, in her opinion, better than her self. Her Parents employing her in the day, she spent almost all the night, instead of sleeping, in prayer: so that many times she had so little sleep as seemed impossible, had it not been a thing *Supernatural*. Her penances, and disciplinings were numerous, and strange, because she communicated them to none, nor had any to hinder, or direct her. Among others, she happened one *Lent* to were upon her naked flesh a *Cow of male* of her Fathers. She retired into some secret place to her prayers, where the Devil exercised her with notable delusions: many times she began her prayers two hours before Midnight, and gave not over, nor reflected thereon, till it was broad day.

In these Exercises she spent, some foure years, and afterward our *Lord*, because she was to serve him in greater matters, sent her very sore and Painfull diseases, as a continual Fever, a Dropfy, the passion of the Heart, and a Cancer, which afterward they cutt off: and in these maladies she continued about Seventeen Years, wherein she was well but a few days. In the fifth year of her sicknesse her Father died: and her Sister *Dona Maria*, when Fourteen years old, about a year after her, made a strange change, and likewise put her self into a plain, and decent habit, though formerly she had been a lover of gallantry, and vain fashions; and began to addict her self to prayer. Their Mother furthered them in all good exercises, insomuch as she gave them leave to trample

world under their feet ; for, being *Gentlewomen* well descended , they employed themselves in a very vertuous, and Pious service of teaching, without taking any stipend , little Children to work , and read ; the better to instruct them in Prayer, and the Christian Doctrine . This did much good ; for many resorted thither, in whom at this day are seen the good habits, which there in their childhood they learnt. It lasted not long ; for the devil, displeased at so good a work, perswaded the Childrens Parents, that it was a disparagement, and an argument of beggary, and Penuriousnesse, to let their Children be so taught on free cost : this, together with the Sickness that molested , and troubled her, made it be left off.

Five years after the Father of these *Gentlewomen*, deceased also their *Mother* ; and, since *Donna Catharina's* call was still to be Religious, but her Parents would never consent thereto, she now consulted about accomplishing it speedily. And because there being no *Monastery* in *Veas*, she intended to go some whither else, their kindred advised them that, in regard they had an estate sufficient to build a *Monastery*, it would be an acceptable work to procure one rather to be erected in their own country, and there become *Nunns*, which would prove a greater service to *God*. But the place being of the *Commandery* of *S. James*, there needed the licence of the *Council of Orders* ; and so she began to endeavour the procuring it : but it proved so difficult to obtain, that Four years were spent, with great colts, and many troubles sustained ; yet, till a Petition was delivered to the *King*, nothing Prevalied. Such (I say) was the difficulty, that her kindred told *Donna Catharina*, that it was in vain to hope, she could therein come off with any satisfaction ; and that she should quite desist from thinking more thereon : and, seeing she almost continually kept her Bed through extreme sickness (as hath been said) they told her, that no *Monastery* would admit her for a *Nunn*. She answered, that if within a Month our *Lord* gave her health, they might know by that signe, his *Divine Maſtēy* was pleased, the *Monastery* should be built ; and that she her self would go to Court for a Licence. When she spake this, she had kept her Bed above half a yeare ; and for about eight yeares before, she was hardly able to stir out of it of her self alone : and in those eight years she had a continual *Hectck Fever*, the *Tisick*, *Dropsy*, an Inflammation of the Liver, so violent, that it scorched her exteriorly, and burnt her very Shift, so that the heat was felt through her garments and coverings ; a thing seeming incredible ; and I my self would needs inform my self concerning it of the *Physician*, who then attended her, being extremely astonished there-

at.

thereat. Besides, she had the running Gout, and the Sciatica.

On Saturday, being S. Sebastians Vigil, our Lord gave her such perfect health, that she knew not how to conceale it, that the miracle might not be divulged. She reports, that, when our Lord would cure her, she felt such an inward trembling, that her Sister thought, she was going to another Life; and instantly she perceived in her Body an extraordinary change; and in her soul, she saith, she discerned another; insomuch as she was evidently bettered; and her health afforded her very great contentment, in that it enabled her to prosecute the erecting of the Monastery, for, she regarded not the suffering. For, from the beginning of Gods calling her, she conceived such a reall detestation, and hatred of her self, that all affliction seemed small to her: she affirms, that she had such a vehement desire of suffering, that she besought God with all her heart to exercise her herein in all ways possible. The Divine Majesty was not wanting in accomplishing this her desire; for, in those eight years they let her blood above five hundred times, besides so many Scarifications, as are seen in her body still: they made her some whereinto they put salt, the Physicians affirming, it was good to draw out the venome, and the malignity of the paine of her side; this torture she endured above twenty times. And, which is more to be admired, immediatly, as soon as the Physician prescibed one of these remedies, she exceedingly longed till the time came, wherein they were to apply it, without any fear at all, nay she encouraged the Physicians in the making of their cauteries, and applying burning irons, wherof she endured many, by reason of a Cancer, and on other occasions that required them. She saith, the cause, that induced her to desire them, was, to try, whether the desires, she had, of becoming a Martyr, were true. When she perceived her self so suddenly recovered, she consulted with her Confessor, and Physician, about changing the aire, and removing to some other place, to the end they might give out, that her changing the aire had cured her: but they refused; nay the Physicians themselves published the miracle; for they already judged her incurable, by reason that she voided Blood at her mouth so corrupt, that they affirmed it to be pieces of her Lungs. She kept her Bed three days, because she durst not rise, lest they should discover it: but, as sickness cannot be hid, so neither could her miraculous recovery; whence this availed her little. She told me, that, the August before, being one time in prayer, she besought our Lord either to take from her that vehement desire, she had, of becoming Religious, and founding a Monastery, or so dispose of things, that it might be effected. When with great certitude she was inwardly assured by our Lord, that she should be well short-

ly, that in *Lent* she should be able to go her self for a *Licence*: and she also affirms, that, in all that time, though her diseases much increased upon her, yet she never lost the hope, which our *Lord* had given her, of doing her this favour: and, although twice they gave her *Extreme Unction*, and once so near dying, that the *Physician* said, they needed not go for the *Oile*, because before it came, she would be dead, yet she quitted not her confidence in our *Lord*, that she should dy a *Nun*. I say not, that in that space, to wit, from *August* to *St. Sebastians day*, they anointed her twice, but before. Her Brothers, and kindred, when they saw the favour, and miracle, our *Lord* had done, in giving her health so suddenly, durst no longer hinder her from entring into *Religion*, and from going to *Court* about the *Foundation*, though it seemed an extravagancy to them. She staid at *Court* three Months, and, finding that she could effect nothing, at length determined to present a *Memoriall* to the *King* himself; who, understanding, that a *Monastery* was to be built for *Discolced Carmelite Nuns*, gave her leave straight.

In compassing to erect this house, it appeared manifestly, that she had already negotiated it with *God*, who was pleased, that the *Superiours* should consent thereto, that were so far off, and also the Revenue small enough. What his *Majesty* wills, cannot faile of being effected. The *Nuns* came at the beginning of *Lent*, in the year 1574. and were received by the people with great solemnity, rejoicing, and procession. There was a generall, and extraordinary Joy; even the children shewed, it was a work, wherem our *Lord* would be served, and take delight. The *Monastery* was founded, and called *S. Joseph's de Salvatore*, the same *Lent*, on *S. Matthias's day*.

The same day the two *Sisters* took the habit with singular contentment: *Donna Catharina* grew every day more healthy, her humility, obedience, and desire of being diseesteemed sufficiently manifesting, that her intentions were reall for the service of our *Lord*, who be for ever blessed.

Amen.

This *Sister* among other things told me, that above twenty years ago she went to bed one night with a great desire of finding out the perfectest *Order*, that was upon earth, therein to become a *Nun*, and she dreamt (to her thinking) that she went in a very narrow path, and extreme dangerous for falling into certain huge precipices, which appeared to her: and she saw a *Discolced Friar* (for, seeing afterward *John de la Miseria*, a *Lay-Brother* of our *Order*, that came to *Veras*, whilst I was there, she said, he seemed to her the same, whom she had beheld in her Dream) who bad her, *Sister, come along with me*; and brought her to a *Monastery*, that had a great

a great number of *Nuns*, where was no light, but that of some Candles lighted, which they carried in their hands. She asked, what *Order* they were of; and all being silent, they lifted up their veils, and smiling, shewed their chearfull visages: and she averrs, that she saw the same faces, which since she hath seen of the *Sisters*: and that the *Prioreſſ* took her by the hand, and said, *Daughter, I would have you be here;* shewing her the *Rule* and *Conſtitutions*. And, when she awaked out of her Dream, she remained in ſuch joy, as ſhe seemed to have bin in Heaven; and afterward writ down what ſhe remembred of the *Rule*. For a long time ſhe acquainted neither her *Confessor*, nor any else with it; and ſhe met with none, that could inform her concerning this *Order*.

Afterward came thither a *Father* of the *Society of Jeſus*, who was acquainted with her desires, to whom ſhe shewed, what ſhe had writ; telling him, that if ſhe could find out that *Order*, ſhe would willingly enter into it preeſtly. The *Father* was acquainted with these *Monasteries* of ours, and ſhould have told her, that it was the *Order* of our *Lady of Mount Carmel*; though he did not express himſelf ſo clearly, as to make her particularly understand this, but mentioned only the *Monasteries*, I had founded: and therupon ſhe ſent a *Messenger* to me, as I ſaid before. When my Anſwer came to her, ſhe was ſo very ill, that her *Confessor* bade her quiet her mind, for that, though ſhe had bin already admitted into a *Monastery*, yet they would eject her again; how much more at preeſt would they boggle at the receiving her in, being in her condition? ſhe was extremely grieved hereat, and turning to our *Lord*, ſaid, with an enflamed affection to him, *My Lord, and my God, I know thou art he, that canſt do all things: O Life of my ſoule, either take from me these desires, or ſhew me a way to accomplish them.* This ſhe ſpake with exceeding great confidence, beſeeching the moſt *Blessed Virgin our Lady*, by the grief, ſhe felt, when ſhe beheld her *Son* dead in her arms, to intercede for her. At that instant ſhe heard a voice in the interior of her ſoul, that ſaid to her, *Believe, and hope, that I am he, that can do all things; thou ſhalt recover thy health; for, he that could binder ſo many diseases, all of them mortall, from taking effect, can more easily remove them.* These words, the faith, gave her ſuch courage, and afforded her ſuch certainty, that ſhe could not doubt, but that ſhe ſhould accomplish her desire; though ſhe were troubled, with divers other maladies, that feized her, till our *Lord* gave her her health, as was ſaid. Indeed that, which ſhe endured, ſeems incredible, had not I informed my ſelf from the *Physician*, from thoſe of the house, and from others; for elſe, for one ſo bad as I am, it had bin no great matter to think, that more was reported, than was true, in the aggravating of her ſickness. Though ſhe be now ſom-

what infirm, yet hath she her health so, as to be able to observe our *Rule*: she finds a strange alacrity, shewing on all occasions such humility, that we all praise God for it. They both gave their whole estates to the *Order*, without making conditions; so, that, though we would not have admitted them for *Nuns*, they could never have required them back. She is so exceedingly weaned from her kinred, and country, that she desires ever to be far from them, and hereto much importunes her *Superiors*: though so obedient withall, that, for this reason, she lives there contentedly enough: and in obedience it was, that she took the *Veile*; for there was no perswading her to be a *Quire-Nun*, but a *Lay-Sister*, till I writ to her, saying many things, and chiding her for her little obedience, in willing any other thing, than that, which the *Father Provinciall* willed: that this was not a way of greater Merit: with other things, treating her roughly: but herein she finds greater delight, when she is thus spoken to. Hereupon her consent was gained, though much against her will. I find nothing in this soule, that tendeth not to the well-pleasing of God: and of the same opinion are all the *Nuns*. His *Divine Majesty* vouchsafe to grant her perseverance, and an encrease of those vertues, and graces, he hath given her, for his greater service, and glory. Amen.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the *Foundation of the Monastery of Sevill.*

BEING at *Veas* expecting the licence of the *Council of Orders* for the *Foundation of Caravacca*, there came to see me a *Father* of the *Discalcedates of our Order*, named *Father Fr. Hieronymus Gratianus de Matre Dei*, who a few years before had taken the Habit, living at *Alcala*, a man of great learning, high esteem, and singular modesty, and who all his life long had been so eminently virtuous, that it appears evidently, the *Virgin our Lady* had selected him for the good of this *Primitive Order*. He dwelling at *Alcala*, far enough from thinking on taking our habit, (but not of being *Religious*) for, though his parents, because in much favour with the *King*, and perceiving their Son's excellent parts, had another design, yet was he far otherwise inclined; his *Father*, who was the *King's Secretary*, desired, he should apply himself to the exercise of his Pen, attending on him in his Office of *Secretary*; but he, though he were very yong, so disliked it, that, by excessive weeping, he obtained his leave to study, and follow, *Divinity*. He treated about entring into the *Society*

ciety of *Jesu*, and had been admitted, but that on a certain occasion those Fathers laid, he must expect a few days longer. He told me, that all his secular recreations, and conveniences, he enjoyed, did but torment him; as conceiving that, not the right way to Heaven. He constantly kept his set-hours of prayer; his retirement, and chastity were extraordinary.

About this time, an intimate friend of his, a *Doctor* too, called *Fr. Joannes de Jesu* took the habit of our *Order* in the *Covent* of *Pastrana*. I know not, whether upon this occasion, or from his undertaking to write of the greatness, and antiquity of our *Order*, it was, that he began to take affection to it, and had his first motive of becoming *Religious*; in regard he was so delighted with reading all the Passages of it, and the citations of grave Authors, that (he said) he many times scrupled the interrupting his study of other things, by not being able to take himself off of these; but that he bestowed his hours of recreation hereon. O the wisdom, and power of *God*! how unable are we to avoid what he will have done! Our *Lord* well saw, what need this work, begun by him, had of such a person. I often praise, and thank him for the favour, he hath shewn us herein: for, if I would have desired of his *Divine Majesty* a person, that in these first beginnings might reduce all the things of our Religion into some good state, and order, I could not have devised how to have asked such a one, as, in him, his *Majesty* hath bestowed on us. Be He blessed for ever.

He therefore being far from such a thought, as the taking this habit; was intreated to go to *Pastrana*, to speak with the *Prioress* of a *Numery* of our *Order* (which as yet was not removed from thence) about admitting one into it. What strange ways the *Divine Providence* takes! For, had he been resolved to go thither to take the Habit, possibly, he had met with so many, that would have dissuaded, and opposed him, as it had never been done. But the *Virgin* our *Lady*, to whom he is greatly devoted, was minded to reward him, by bestowing her Habit on him. And I conceive, she was the instrument of *Gods* doing him this favour; and likewise the same glorious *Virgin* was (I believe) the cause of his taking it, and being so well affected to our *Order*: our *B. Lady* not willing, that one, so desirous of serving her, should want the occasion, and opportunity of putting it in execution: it being her custome, to favour those, who would gladly benefit themselves by her Patronage.

Being but a Child in *Madrid*, he went very often to an Image of our *Lady*, whereto he bare great devotion (I remember not where it stood), he called her his *Mistress*, and frequently visited it. She, certainly, obtained for him of her *Son*, that purity, wherewith he always lived. He saith, She seemed to him sometimes, to have had her eyes swollen with weeping,

weeping, for the many offences committed against her Son. Hence arose in him an impetuous, and vehement desire of the Salvation of Souls, and a passionate resentment, when he saw God offended. He is so strongly affected with this desire of the good of Souls, that, what ever pains it cost him, seems small, if he conceive he doth any service thereby : this I have seen by experience in many troubles, which he hath undergone.

Now the *B. Virgin* bringing him to *Pastrana* upon another designe ; not intended by him ; for, he proposed to himself the going to procure the habit for one, that desired to be a *Nun* there, *God* was pleased to bestow it on him. O the secret ways of *God* ! and how (without our intending it) he goes disposing us for the doing us favours ! as he recompenced this soul the good works, he had done, and the good example he had always given ; and the great desire he had, of serving his glorious *Mother* : for surely his *Majesty* must ever requite this with ample retribution. Being come to *Pastrana*, he went to speak with the *Priores* about admitting that person a *Nun* ; and it seems, that he rather treated with her that she should obtain of our *Lord* his own entrance into the *Order*. For, as soon as she saw him, his manner of converse, and way of proceeding pleased her much ; and it is so taking, that it most-what forces those that deale with him to love him (a speciall favour of our *Lord*) so that he is exceedingly beloved of all his inferiors, Men, and Women. For, though he leaves no fault unpunished, proceeding herein with extreme exactnes, aiming at the *Orders* advancement, yet he doth it with such a mild, and grateful sweetnes, that it seems, none can complain of him. Therefore(as I said)the *Priores*,as likewise the rest, being so pleased with him, hath a great desire, he should come into our *Order*, and expressed her mind herein to the *Sisters*, representing to them, of what importance it would be to the *Order* (for there were, then, very few, or none, such) that they all might earnestly pray to *God*, not to let him go away again, without taking the habit of a *Discalceate*. This *Priores* is a very great Servant of *God*, and I believe, that her prayers alone might suffice, for the obtaining of our *Lord* what she desired ; how much more with the aid of such good souls as lived there ? they all took the matter into serious consideration, and with fastings, disciplinings, and prayers, continually besought his *Majesty*, and so he was pleased to do us this favour : for, when *Father Grasian* went to the *Covet* of the *Discalced Friars*, and beheld such religous observance, and good accommodation for serving our *Lord*, (and above all, that it was the *Order* of his Glori-
ous *Mother*, whom he so much desired to serve) his heart began to relent, and incline to return no more to the World. And though the devill objected

objected to him many difficulties, in particular, the grief that his Father and Mother would receive hereupon, who exceedingly loved him, and hoped, he would prove a great stay to the whole family (being full of children, both Sons, and Daughters) yet he, leaving this care to *God*, for whose sake he forsook all, determined now to become a devoted Servant of our *B. Lady's*, and take her Habit : so , it was given him to the great joy of all , especially of the *Priores*, and *Nunns*, who ceased not to praise, and render many thanks to our *Lord*, conceiving , that *God* had done them this favour for their prayers. He passed his year of *Probation* with such humility, as might beseem one of the meanest *Novices*. Particularly his vertue was tried at a time, when, the *Prior* being absent from the *Monastery*, there was left *President* a *Frier*, one very yong, without learning, and of a mean talent, and prudence for governing, as having no experience, because but lately admitted into *Religion*. It was strange to see, after what sort he governed the *Religious*, and the Mortifications, he imposed on them ; and, every time I think thereon, I am amazed, how they could suffer it : but it was found afterward, that he was extream melancholick ; and, wherever he hath come, he hath caused great trouble, though when under subjection, and there hath bin much a do with him ; how much more then, think ye, when in command ? for, *Melancholy* hath much power over him. He is a good *Religious* man ; but *God* somtimes permits such errours to be committed, in putting such persons in office, that the vertue of Obedience may be perfected in those, he loves : so was it here. In recompence hereof, *God* hath bestowed an extraordinary light, in point of Obedience, on *Father Fr. Hieronymus de Mare Dei*, for teaching it to his subjects ; as one, who had made so good a beginning, by practising himself therein. And , that he might not want experience in every thing which we need, he had , three months before his *Profession*, violent temptations ; but he , like a stout *Captain*, designed for the *Sons of the Virgin*, manfully defended himself against them, and, the more the devill assaulted him, and pressed, to make him quit the Habit, so much the more he then fortified himself, by ingaging not to quit it, and fixing his mind resolutely to take the vowed. He gave me a certain *Trait*, he composed, during those temptations, which occasioned great devotion in me ; whereby is sufficiently discovered the strength *God* gave him.

It may seem impertinent, that he should communicate with me so many particulars concerning his soule, but perhaps our *Lord* permitted it , that I might insert them here, to the end he might be praised in his Creatures : for I know, that neither to his *Confessor*, nor to any other person, he hath discovered so much. Somtimes he had occasion to think, that I might

have som experience in such things, both from my many years, and what he hath heard of me. In discouling of several other matters, he hapned likewise to mention these, and other things, which I mean not to relate, lest I be too tedious. I have bin here very sparing, to the end that, if this writing at any time come to his hands, it may not displease him: nor could I well be more, nor think fit, (since, if ever he see this it will be long firs^t) to forbeare the mentioning one, who had bin so instrumentall in this restauration of the *Primitive Rule*. For, though he was not the first that began it, yet the time was, when I could have bin some times displeased, that it was begun, if I had not had much confidence in such a great favour of *God*. I speak of the *Covents* of the *Friers*; for, through his goodness those of the *Nuns* have always to this present prospered well; but those of the *Friers*, though they proceeded not ill, yet shewed, they were beginning to fall very shortly: because having no *Provinciall* of their own, they were governed by the *Relaxed Fathers*. Those who are able to govern, as the Father Fr. *Antonio de Jesu* being one of them that began it, they did not approve, or favour him so, as to give him this authority; nor yet had they particular constitutions given them by our most *Reverend Father Generall*. In every *Covenant* they did what they listed; till they came to be governed, and live of themselves, apart from the *Calceates*, they underwent huge troubles: for, some liked one thing; others another; so that sometimes I was much displeased, and grieved therewith. This our *Lord* remedied by means of Father Fr. *Hieronymus de Matre Dei*; For, they made him *Commissary Apostolick*, and gave him authority and command over the *Discalced*, Men, and Women; he made *Constitutions* for the *Friers* (for, we *Nuns* had them already from our most *Reverend Father Generall*, and so he made them not for us, but for them) by the *Apostolical* authority, which he had, and by his other excellent parts, which our *Lord* had given him, as was laid. The first time that he visited them, he put every thing in so good order, that it evidently appeared, he was assissted by the *Divine Majesty*, and that the *B. Virgin, our Lady*, had chosen him for the advancing of her order: whom I most earnestly beseech, to obtain of her *B. Son* continual favour, and grace, that it may proceed still further in his holy service. Amen.

CHAP. XXVIII.

She Prosecutes the FOUNDATION of S. JOSEPH of MOUNT CARMEL in SEVIL.

When I said, that the Father Dr. Hieron Gratiæ came to *Veras* to see me, we had never seen one another before, though I much desired it; but there had passed Letters between us sometimes. I was exceeding glad, when I understood he was come; for I extremely wished for him, by reason of the good reports, that were made me of him: and I was so well satisfied concerning him, that, methought, those, who had commended him to Me, knew not to the full his rare qualities, and worth. And, being so overcome with troubles, me thought, by only seeing him, our Lord represented to me the great good, that by his means should befall us: wherupon I was so exceedingly delighted; and overjoyed at this time, that indeed I much wondred at my self. He had no Commission then, save only for *Andaluzia*; but, being at *Veras*, the Nuntio sent for him, and made him Commissary also of the Province of *Castile*, over the Discalced, both Men, and Women. The joy, I felt, was so great, that I could not satiate my self, for those days, with rendring thanks to our Lord, and I would willingly have done nothing else.

At that time was brought the licence [from the Council of Orders] for founding in * *Caravaca*, very much differing from what my design required, wherupon it was necessary to remedy it at Court. I disliked the staying so long at *Veras*, and would have returned to *Castile*, having writ to the *Foundresses*, by no means to found it, except a certain particular, wanting in the Licence, were requested, and obtained; for wch reason it was requisite to send to Court. Father Hieron (to whom that House was to be subject, because he was Commissary of all the Province of *Andaluzia*), being then here, I could do nothing without his consent; and so I communicated the busines with him. It seemed to him, that, I going hence, the Foundation of *Caravaca* should rest a while; and likewise, that it would be a great service to God, to found a House in *Sevil*, which he judged very easy, having bin requested thereto by some eminent, and rich persons, who would presently bestow a house: and, besides, the Archbishop of *Sevil*, who greatly favoured the Order, it was conceived, would take it kindly, and esteem it a welcome office; so, we agreed, that I should go to *Sevil* with the *Priores*, and *Nuns*, whom I had designed for *Caravaca*.

vaca. I have ever refused to erect our Monasteries in *Andaluzia*, for certain reasons : for , when I went to *Vea*, had I known, it was in the Province of *Andaluzia*, I should at no hand have gone thither : but there was a mistake, for though the town be not in *Andaluzia* (which begins, I think, 12. or fifteen Miles further) yet is it depending on that Province. When I saw, it was my *Superiors* pleasure, I presently submitted; for, this grace our *Lord* hath bestowed on me, that I think, they proceed rightly in all : though I was then resolved for another *Foundation*, and had also very weighty reasons for not going to *Sevill*.

Presently they began to make provision for the Journey, because hot weather came on apace. *Father Gratian*, the *Apostolical Commissary* departed, being sent for by the *Nuncio*, and we went toward *Sevil* with my good Companions *Father Julian d' Avila*, *Antonio Gaitano*, and a *Discalced Friar*. We went in certain Waggon's very close covered ; for this was always our manner of travelling : and, being come to our Inn, we took a Chamber, good, or bad, as it fell out, and set a *Sister* at the door, who received all we had need of ; in so much as neither those, who came along with us, entred in thither. By making great hast we reached *Sevil* the *Thursday* before *Trinity Sunday*, having suffered extreem heats by the way : for (besides that we travelled also on the *Holy days*) I tell ye, *Sisters*, that, when the Sun beat with all his force upon the Waggon's, to go into them, was to go into a *Purgatory*. Somtimes, by thinking on *Hell*, otherwhiles considering, that somthing was done, and suffered for *God*, the *Sisters* passed on very chearfully, and contentedly. For, the fix *Nuns*, that came with me, were such persons, as, me thought, I durst venture to go with them into the *Moors Country*, and they would have had the courage, or, (to say better) our *Lord* would have given it them, to have suffered for His sake ; for, such were their discourses, and desires. They were likewise much exercised in Prayer, and Mortification; for, being to live so remote, I procured to have such, as seemed most fit for that purpose ; and all was but necessary, considering the troubles, they endured ; somewhereof, and those the greatest, I will not relate ; because they may concern some person particularly.

One day, it was before *Pentecost*, our *Lord* sent them a great Croſs, which was, that a violent fever seized me : I believe, their prayers, and cries to *God* prevailed, that the disease continued no longer ; for I never had fever in my life, but it was also very long : it was ſuch, that I was beside my ſelf, like one frantic. They often brought me water, but it was so heated by the Sun, that it refreshed me little. I will not omit the acquainting you with the bad lodging, I found in this exigence, which was
a little

a little Chamber next the roof, much exposed to, and heated by the Sun, without any Window ; and, if the door were but opened, it was all filled with Sun so, as it could not be endured. Ye are to observe, that this climate is not like *Castile*, but more sultry, and intolerable. They made me ly on a Bed, than which I should have thought it better, to have lien all along upon the floor ; because it was on one side so low, and on the other so high, that I knew not how to stay there ; it seemed, as it were, all of sharp Stones. What a thing sicknes is ! for, with health every thing is born easily : In fine, I held it best to rise, and that we should set forward on our Journey ; esteeming it better, to endure the Sun in the open field, than in that close Chamber. What will become of those poor creatures, that are in Hell ? that are forced to continue always fixed, and can never change ? for, though all be suffering, yet the shifting from one misery to another, seems to afford some ease. I have somtimes felt a very violent pain in one part; and, though another no less tormenting hath seized me in another, methought, by meer changing, I have found ease ; and so it hapned here. I was not troubled(as I remember)at my being sick; but the *Sisters* were exceedingly grieved therat. Our *Lord* was pleased, that the violence, and extremity of the Malady lasted not beyond that day.

Going litle further (whether two days Journey, or no , I know not) another accident befell us, that put us to some trouble ; passing by Boat the river *Guadalquivir*; for, conveying over the Waggons, it was not posseble, to follow the Rope directly, which was across the River, and guided the Boat, but we must wind about somwhat, though thus also the rope helped us, a litle, we also winding it. But it happened(I know not how) that those, who held it, let it go ; and the Boat, loosed from the Rope, and without Oars, went with one of our Waggons down the River. Whilst we had not as yet lost the Rope, our men, laying hold of it with all their strength, made shift to stay it ; but such was the violence of the Stream, that the Rope drew them backward, and threw them down ; till, able to do no more, they let it go. All made lowd cries, and we put up our prayers to *God*. The Boatman moved compassion in me, seeing him so troubled, much more than did the danger it self. And indeed a Son of his caused great devotion in me, which I shall never forget, he seemed to me to be Ten, or Eleven years old ; and this litle one was so extremely grieved, to see his Father in that distress, that I much praised our *Lord* for it. All this a Gentleman beheld from a Castle that was near ; and, moved with pity, sent some to help us. But, as his *Divine Majesty* always with troubles affords likewise his mercies ; so was it here : for , it hapned, that the Boat strook upon a Sand, where was little Water, and so was capable of help.

Afterwards

Afterwards we should scarce have found our way, it being night, had not one, that came from the Castle to help us, served us for a Guide. I thought not to treat of these matters at all, which imports little; for else I were able to say much of misadventures in the Journies: I know well, I have bin unseasonable in enlarging my self in this.

A much greater trouble to me, than these mentioned, was that, which befell us the first day of *Pentecost*. We made hast to reach *Cordoue* in good time, that we might hear *Mass* without any ones seeing us: and, for the more privacy, they directed us to a *Church*, that stood beyond the Bridge: we were now about to pass it, and here we met with another obstacle; for, the Waggons might not pass the bridge, without the *Governour's* licence, which we had not; and, before we got it, above two hours were spent, because he was not risen; and meanwhile many came about the Waggons, to see who were there. This we little heeded; for, they could not see us being covered so close up. When the Licence was come, another trouble befell us; for, the Waggons could not pass through the Gate of the Bridge; so that, for this, they were to be straitened; and, about that, I know not how, was spent another hour. At length, when we came to the *Church*, where *Father Julian d' Avila* was to say *Mass*, we found it full of people. It bearing the title of the *Holy Ghost*, and there was kept a great festivall, and a *Sermon*: which we knew not of. When I saw this, it troubled me exceedingly; and, in my opinion, it had bin better, to have gone away without hearing *Mass*, than have entred into such a throng of people. *Father Julian* thought not so; and, he being a *Theologe*, we all adhered to his judgment; for, the rest haply would have followed mine else; and it had bin ill done, though I know not, whether I should have relied meerly upon my own opinion. We alight near the *Church*; and, though none could see our faces, because we always wore large Veils, hanging down before, yet it was enough to be seen with them, and with the white Cloaks, that we use to wear, and the Sandals on our feet, to move all to curiositie; as it did. That sudden heartake, and trouble, was enongh to take away my Feaver, which, doublefes, was a great disturbance to me, and to all. At our entring into the *Church* met me an honest Man, becoming our Guide, and breaking the Crowd: Earnestly requested him, to lead us to a *Chappell*; he did so; locked it, and left us not, till he brought us out of the *Church*. A few days after he came to *Sevil*, and told a *Father* of our *Order*, that, for this good office performed to the Servants of *God*, our *Lord* had done him the favour of having a great estate besallen him, which he never dreamt of. I tell you, Daughters, though this haply may seem nothing to you, to me it was one of

of the worst accidents, I ever had ; for, the violence, and thronging of the people was, as if Bulls had broken in : therfore I longed to be gone thence, though I ought not ; having, after this a worse passage through the publick festivall of their *Whitsun-sports* ; but this we avoided, by taking a way, that was under a Bridge.

Being come to *Sevil* to the house, which *Father Marian*, as I advised, had hired for us, I thought that now all was done ; because the *Archbishop* much favoured the *Discalced*, and had somtime writ to me, shewing me great kindnes : yet all prevented not my undergoing vast trouble also in this *Foundation* ; because so *God* appointed. The *Archbishop* was much against *Monasteries for Nuns*, founded with Rent, and he hath reason. The mistake was (or rather, it was the Providence of *God*, that so this work might be effected) that, if they had told it him before I was on my way, I am confident, he would not have given leave, and so no *Monastery* had been erected there. But the *Father Commissary*, and *Father Marian* (who was exceeding glad of my coming) conceiving, that it would be a very high piece of service, and that my arrivall would be exceeding welcome to him, told him not of this before : and so by this, as I was saying, might be committed a great error, they intending only good. For, in all the other *Monasteries* erected, the first thing I did, was, procuring the *Ordinary's* licence, as the *Holy Councill* enjoins : here we not only took it for granted, but thought, we did him a speciall service (as indeed it was) : this I came to know afterward, but in effect it was our *Lords* pleasure, that no *Foundaion* should be erected without great troubles to me ; some on one manner, some on another.

So being come to the house, which (as I said) we had hired, I thought to take possession presently, as I used to do, that we might say the *Divine Office*. *Father Marian*, who was there, began to desire me to deferr (for he would not plainly tell me all, lest it might afflict me) but, his reasons, he brought, being not sufficient, I perceived where the difficulty lay, to wit, in the *Archbishops* unwillingness to grant the Licence : and so he told me, that he thought fit, that the *Monastery* should have Rent, or some such thing ; for, I now remember it not. At last he told me, that he had no mind to license any *Monastery of Nuns* ; nor, since he was *Archbishop* (having been so many years of that place, and of *Cordova*, and also he is a great servant of *God*) had ever granted such license ; especially, for a *Monastery* founded in poverty, he would never do it. This was in plain terms, that the *Monastery* should not be erected. On one side, I disliked this, because it was in the City of *Sevil* ; for, though I had had means to do it, yet I founded no *Monasteries* with Rents, except :

in little Torons ; where either they should not be built, or should have sufficient maintenance. On the other side I saw, I had but one farthing left of the expences of our Journey, having brought nothing with us, but that we carried on our backs, and some woollen Shifts, and small Clothes, and what we needed to cover us in the Waggons : so that, they who came along with us being to return, we were fain to borrow Mony, which a friend there of *Antony Gaitan's* lent us ; and *Father Marian* procured some, for furnishing the House : neither had we an House of our own, so as it seemed a thing impossible. At last (by the importunity, I conceive, of *Father Marian*) the *Archbishop* gave leave for them to say *Mass* there on *Trinity Sunday*, which was the first ; and he sent to forbid the ringing any Bell, or hanging any up ; but that was done already. Thus it continued above fifteen days ; so that, on my own head, had it not bin for *Father Commissary*, and *Father Marian's* sake, without any displeasure of mine at all, I would have returned to *Veas* with my *Nuns*, for finishing the *Foundation* of *Caravacca*. I had a much greater displeasure in respect of the time, wherein I was so delayed (I suppose it was above a Month ; for, having a bad memory, I do not well remember it) because our return seemed already to me less intolerable, than the notwithstanding presently of our House to be a *Monastery*. *Father Marian* would never let me write to the *Archbishop*, but by little and little sweetned him, carrying him *Father Commissary's* letters from *Madrid*.

One thing well pacified me from having much scruple, that the *Monastery* was not yet suddenly declared, which was, that *Mass* was said here with his Licence ; and that we always said the *Divine Office* in the *Quire*. The *Archbishop* omitted not sending to visit me, and to tell me, that he would shortly come to see me. He likewise sent a *Priest* of his to say the first *Mass* ; all which, I plainly discerned, served for nothing else (in my opinion) but to afflict me, although the cause of it was neither for my self, nor my Companions, but for that, which *Father Commissary* suffered. For, he, having commanded me to go from *Veas* for this *Foundation*, was in a great expectation to hear some good issue ; and, if any disagreement had hapned, would have been exceedingly troubled therat : and I had divers sufficient motives, and grounds, for dissolving, and voiding the whole business. At the same time came our *Relaxed Fathers* to enquire how, and by what authority the *Monastery* was erected : I shewed them the *Patent*, that I had from our most Reverend *Father General*, wherewith they were satisfied ; for, had they known what the *Archbishop* did, I believe this would not have sufficed them, but this was not discovered ; nay, they all imagined it much to his mind, and liking. It pleased God,

that

that the *Archbishop* came to see me, whereupon I represented to him the grievance, he did us ; and at last he told me, it should be as I would : and from thenceforward he hath still on all occasions favoured us.

CHAP. XXIX.

She prosecutes her discourse of the FOUNDATION in SEVIL ; and what passed, till they had a dwelling of their own.

One would not think, that in a *City* so large as *Sevil*, and a people so wealthy, I should have had less furtherance, and means for founding, than in all other Towns, and places, I came in : yet I was so farr discommodated there, that I somtimes thought, it was not fit for us to have a *Monastery* in that *City*. I know not whether this be not the same Climate, or no, which I have heard tell of, where the Devils by *Gods* permission have more power to tempt : for here they assaulted me so furiously, that, in all my life I never seemed so pusillanimous, and cowardly, as I did here. I tell you true, I knew not somtimes, whether I were my self ; though the confidence I use to have in our *Lord*, did not leave me : but my nature was so altered from what it was ordinarily, after my being employed in such matters, that I discerned plainly, our *Lord* had for a while withdrawn his hand, to the end, it might remain a while in its own being, and I might see, that, if formerly I had any courage, it was not mine. Now I having staid there, from the time, I mentioned, till a little before *Lent*, never had thoughts of buying a House, nor had wherewithall, nor yet one to give security, as in other places. They, who had spoken great matters, and made large proffers to *Father Commissary*, desiring him to send the *Nuns*, for there where Women, that would take the habit, appeared not, that I saw in our behalf : and they, who, before our coming, requested to be admitted, afterward affrighted at the rigour of our life, durst not ; suspecting, they might not be able to hold out : only one was admitted, of whom hereafter. Now the time approached of my being commanded away from *Andaluzia* to return to *Castile* for other affairs, that there presented themselves. I was extreamly troubled to leave the *Nuns* without a House ; though I saw I served for nothing there ; because the favour, which *God* on such occasions usually doth me, of having some one to assist me in such undertakings, here failed me.

It pleased *God*, that a *Brother* of mine should then come hither from
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the Indies, where he had been above four and thirty years ; his name was *Lorenzo de Zepeda*, who disliked it more than I, that the *Nuns* should be without a House of their own : he helped us much, especially in procuring the taking of that House, where now they live. But I did nothing else save make my address to his *Divine Majesty*, beseeching him most earnestly, not to dismiss me without getting them a House ; and I procured the *Sisters* to request the same, and also to recommend themselves to the glorious *S. Joseph* : so we made many prayers, and processions to the *Virgin our Lady*. With this, and the seeing my *Brother* resolved to assist us, I began to treat about purchasing some Houses ; but, when the agreement seemed almost concluded, all was defeated. Being one day in prayer,, Beseeching our *Lord*, that, these being his *Spouses*, and so passionately desirous to please him, he would provide them a house ; he said to me, *I have heard you already, leave it to me*. I was exceeding glad, conceiving, I had one already : and so it was. We consulted of buying one, that liked all, because it stood in a good place ; but it was so old, and ill-built, that we were to reckon of rebuilding it, and buying only the seat for little less pris, than that house cost, they now have. The busness being already agreed on, so that nothing wanted but drawing the Writings, I was little or nothing satisfied therewith ; for, methoughts, it consisted not with the last words, I had heard in Prayer ; for those words implied, as I understood them, that he would give us a good House. So it pleased *God*, that the Landlord, who sold it, though much a gainer, put a stop to the drawing, of the Writings, when it was almost concluded: and so, without any fault made, we could relinquish the Bargain ; which was a speciall favour of our *Lord*; for, those, that were there, would have been troubled as long as they lived there, and never have done building, and fitting it, yet wanted where withall.

The principal caufe hereof was a *Priest*, a great Servant of *God*, who almost at our first arrivall here, understanding, we had no *Mass*, came, and said every day ; though lodging far from us, and the weather extreme hot : his name was *Garzia Alvarez*, a person exceeding vertuous ; and, as such, reputed in the City for his good works, whereto he continually addicted himself : and, had he been rich too, we should have wanted nothing, through his assistance. He well knew what a House it was, and therefore judged it ridiculous to pay so dear ; and so he told us every day, and endeavoured to stop any further mention therof. He and my *Brother* went to see that, where they now live, and came back so taken with it (and good reason, since our *Lord* would have it so) that in two, or three days the writings were drawn up. It was not a little we suffered

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In passing to this House ; for, he that dwelt in it would not quit it, and the *Franciscan Fathers* living hard by, came immediately, and wished us in no wise to go thither. We may thank *God*, that the Writings were not authentick, nor drawn so very sure, but that the Bargain might be broke; for we were in danger to pay six thousand *Crowns*, that the house cost, without being able to get possession. The *Prioreess* did not desire our leaving it, but prayed *God*, that agreement might not be broken; for our *Lord* gave her greater faith, and courage, than Me, in that which belonged to this House; and in every thing else, she being much better, than I. We continued above a Month in this distraction; and afterward it pleased *God*, that one night very privately we removed thither, the *Prioreess*, and I, and two *Nuns* more, that the *Friers* might not know, till after possession taken, being in great fear. They that accompanied us said, that so many shadows, as they saw, seemed to them *Friers*.

At break of day the good *F. Garzia Alvarez*, who came with us, said the first *Mass* in it, and so we were out of fear. O my *Jesus*, how many such have I undergone for the taking possession ! I consider, if going for no bad intent, but the serving *God*, canst such a terroure, what must those persons seele, who undertake matters directly against both *God*, and their Neighbour ? I know not what gain they can make, when thus counter-poised. My Brother was not there, senting himself a while by reason of a certain errour made in the *Instrument*, which, being drawn up in hast, is no wonder ; and it was a great prejudice to the *Monastery*; but, He being the security, they would have sent him to prison, which would have troubled us exceedingly, because he was a Stranger ; yea we were so long molested, till he lay down some goods, upon which they took security. Afterward the busynes went on well, though for a time we had some Suits. We were shut up in some Rooms below, and my Brother he staid all day with the Workmen, and provided us Victuals, as likewise he had done long before : for, in regard all then knew not, that there was a *Monastery* (because we lived in a private House) little Alms came, except from a holy Old Man *Prior* of the *Carthusians*, called *de las Cuevas*, a great Servant of *God*. He was born at *Avila*, of the family of the *Pantofcians*. Our *Lord* hath made him exceedingly kind to us from the time he came hither ; and, I suppose, he will to his death continue to do us good every way. Wherfore, Sisters, it is but just, ye should recommend to the *Divine Majesty* one, that hath so eminently afflited us, if ye shall read this (or whoever else have favoured us, alive or dead) for, to that end I here mention them ; to this holy Old Man we are indebted much.

We continued thus (as I think) above a Month; for, in reckoning days,
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I have a bad memory, and so may mistake; understand still a little more, or less, seeing it matters not concerning days. During this Month my Brother laboured exceedingly in making of some rooms a *Church*, and in fitting of every thing, so that we took no pains. All being finished, I desired without noise to have the *B. Sacrament* set up, being extremely unwilling to give offence, where it may be avoided; and so I told *Father Garza Alvarez*. But he further considered of it with *Father Prior* of the *Carthusians*; who, had it been their own busines, could not more earnestly, and industriously have perfused it. It liked them, that the *Monastery* might be the more noted in *Sev.l*, to have the *B. Sacrament* solemnly introduced; whereupon they went, and advised with the *Archbishop*, who was of the same opinion: and so they agreed amongst them, that the *H. Sacrament* should be taken from some *Parish*, and thence brought in great solemnity to our *Church*; the *Archbishop* for that purpose giving order, that it should be attended on by the *Clergy*, and some *Confraternities*, and the streets be hung.

The good *Father Garzia Alvarez* adorned our *Cloyster* (which then served for a passage) and the *Church* very neatly, and erected many fair *Altars*, honouring the solemnity with curious Inventions. Among others, there was a Fountain of *Orange-flower Water*, without our procuring, or desiring it, nay against it; though afterward it caused great Devotion in us, and we rejoiced, that our festivall was so solemnly kept, and the Streets so handsomly adorned. There was likewise such excellent *Musick* of Voices, and Instruments, that the holy *Prior* of the *Carthusians* told me, he had never seen such a solemnity in *Sevil*; so that it manifestly appeared to be the Work of *God*. Himself, which he used not, went in the *Procession*: and the *Archbishop* placed there the *B. Sacrament*. Ye see here, *Daughters*, the poor *Discalceates* now honoured by all people; and yet a little before, it seemed, they could not so much as get a little Water to drink, though the River there hath great store. The concourse of people flocking to this solemnity was incredible.

There hapned one very strange Accident, by report of all that saw it. Many Vollies of shot, and Fireworks were made: After *Procession* ended, when it was even Night, they had an humour to discharge more; and, how I know not, the Fire light into some of the Powder, so that it was taken for a wonder, that he that kept it was not killed. The Flame ascended to the Top of the *Cloyster*; and, the Arches being adorned with some yellow, and crimson Taffatas, it was conceived, they would be burnt to ashes, whereas they were not hurt at all, little, or much: but that which caused the wonderment was, that the floor, under the Arches where the

Taffatas

Taffatas were, was blacked with the smoke, and the Taffatas, which were above, without any blemish, as though the fire had not come near them : which, when they saw, all were amazed thereat, and the *Nuns* rendred thanks to our *Lord*; because they had not wherewith to buy new Taffata. The Devill had such a spite at this solemnity, that was made, and to see another House of *God* erected, that he would fain have revenged himself some way ; but his *Majesty* would not suffer him. He be for ever blessed.

Amen.

CHAP. XXX.

*SHE continues the same discourse of the FOUNDATION of
S. JOSEPH'S MONASTERY in SEVIL. She
relates some things, of the first Nun,
that entred.*

YE may easily, my *Daughters*, imagine the Joy we had that Day. For my self, I can affirm, mine was very great ; but especially, when I saw, I left the *Sisters* in so convenient a house, in a good seat, and the *Monastery* known; and wherein they had already *Nuns* able to discharge the greatest part of the Purchase thereof ; so that with the Portions of thole, that wanted of the Number, how little soever they brought, they might be out of Debt : and, above all, the having had some trouble gladded me. But when I thought, I should have had a little time to rest in, it was requisite again to suffer : for, this festivity was the *Sunday* before *Pentecost*, in the year 1576. and presently the *Monday* following I went away, because extreme hot weather was coming on ; and I desired, if possible, not to travell on the *Feast of Pentecost*, but keep it at *Malagon* : for, I had a good mind to have stayed there some days, and, in stead of this, I was speedily hasted away. Our *Lord* was not pleased to let me hear *Mass* even once in that *Church*. The *Nuns* were exceedingly troubled, and their joy embittered with my departure, which they much resented. For, we had been all that year together, and suffered together afflictions so great(for, as I should, the greatest I mention not here)that, to my thinking, (except the first Foundation of *Avila*, with which none may compare) not any one hath cost me so much, as this ; for that these troubles were for the most part interior. His *Divine Majesty* grant, he may be ever served therein ; for, in this respect, all sufferings are small :

And

And so I hope it will be ; seeing his *Majesty* begins to attract some excellent Souls to this *Monastery* : for , as for the five that remained there, of those I had brought with me, I have spoken before how good they were, though it be the least that could be said.

Of the *First* that was admitted, I have a mind to say somthing, because it is a thing that will delight you. She is a yong *Gentlewoman*, Daughter to a Father and Mother very good Christians, and devout, her Father a *Mountainer*. She being a Child about seven years old, an Aunt of hers desired her of her Mother to bring up, having no Children : when she came to her house, she kindly entertained her, and bore her great affection, as was fit. But three Women, that , before the child came to the house, had hopes of enjoying her estate (and now it was evident, that, bearing a singular love to her, she intended to reserve it most for her) plotted about the removing this Obstacle by a device of the devill ; which was, to accuse the Girle of a purpose to make away her *Aunt* ; and that, for this end, she had given one of them I know not what Mony, to buy her some *Mercury*. This was told the *Aunt* ; and , because all three agreed in the same tale, she presently believed it ; and the Mother of the Child also ; who being a very virtuous Woman , took the Girle, and carried her home ; supposing, that in her, she brought up a very wicked Woman. This *Beatrice de Mare Dei* (for , so she is now called) told me , that her Mother for above a year whipt , and tortured her every day, making her also ly and sleep on the bare ground, to get her to confess her so heinous crime. When the Child told her, she did it not ; yea that she knew not, what *Mercury* was, the Mother thought her much worse, seeing her have the boldnes , and courage, thus to deny, and hide it : the poor Womah was afflicted, to see her so hard, and obstinate in concealing this wickednes, as conceiving, she would never mend. It was much the Girle did not run away, to free her self from such misery, and torment ; but, being innocent, God kept her, that she always spoke truth. And, seeing, his *Majesty* undertakes the defence of the guiltless, he inflicted on two of those Women so grievous a sicknes, that they seemd quite distracted; whereupon, taking it for a scourge of their wickednes, and false accusation, they sent privatly for the Child, and asked her forgiveness, and being at the point of death, recanted all : and the third likewise did so too , dying in Child-birth. In fine, all three died in great torment, in recompence of what they made that Innocent suffer. This I learnt not from her only ; for also her Mother (seeing her now a *Nunn*) and lamenting the hard usage of her, related it afterward to Me, together with other things, assuring me, that she endured many, and sore Martyrdomes : and, her Mother having no more

more Children, being likewise a very good Christian, and devout, God permitted her to be the tormenter thus of her Daughter, intending her good : she is indeed a very pious woman, and of great veracity.

The Girle, being somewhat above twelve years old, by reading a Book, that relates the life of *S. Ann*, a *Carmelites*, conceived great devotion toward the holy *Hermites* of *Mount Carmel*; because the Book tells, how *S. Ann's* Mother (called I think *Emereentiana*) went often to confer with them : and from this time she began to entertain such devotion to this *Order* of the *Virgin our Lady*, that she presently made a Vow of Chastity, and of becoming her *Nun*. She was much alone ; and, when she could, addicted herself wholly to Prayer, where in particular God vouchsafed her eminent graces, and our *Lady* very signall favours. She would fain have been a *Nun* presently, but durst not by reason of her Parents ; nor knew she, where to find this *Order*. And it was remarkable, that, there being in *Sevil* a *Monastery* of our *Lady of Carmel* of the *Rule relaxed*, she never came to know it, till she heard of these *Monasteries*, I am founding ; which was many years after. When she came to a marriageable estate, her Parents consulted, whom to match her to, being very yong : but, having none besides her, they were somewhat troubled at the parting with her : for, though they had had other Children, all died, and she survived, that was least beloved : for, when that, which I mentioned, befell her, she had a Brother alive, who took her part, wishing her Parents not to believe such a horrid Crime. A Match was already concluded on ; and, supposing there was nothing more to be done, they acquainted her with it : she answered, she had vowed Chastity, and that in no wise, though they should kill her, she would not consent to marry.

The devill, who blinded them, or God, who permitted it, that she might be a *Martyr*, made them imagine, she had committed some miscarriage, and therefore would not marry. They, considering, they had already passed their words, and seeing it fell out otherwise, beat her cruelly, and many ways tortured her, so, as they almost were minded to hang her ; and proceeded so far, that they had well nigh strangled her, and it was a chance she died not on it. God, who designed her for greater matters, preserved her life. She told me, that in this extremity, she felt, as it were, nothing ; for, she remembred what *S. Agnes* had suffered (our *Lord* bringing it to her mind) and that she rejoiced, she shoud dy : hereupon she kept her Bed three Months, unable to stir at all.

It seems very strange, that of a Maid, who had never parted from her Mothers side, having a Father so discreet, and vigilant (by what I understood) they could imagine such a crime ; for, she was ever pious, and virtuous

tuous, and so liberall, that she gave in Alms, all she could get. Those whom our *Lord* will honour with sufferings, he finds out severall ways for : though from thence forward, for some years he continually discovered to them the vertue, and excellency of their Daughter ; so, that afterward they freely allowed her whatever she would bestow in Alms : and her persecutions were turned into caresles, and affection ; but, out of her extreme desire of being a *Nunn*, every thing was afflictive, and grievous to her ; so that she told me, she lived a very sad, and disconsolate life.

Thirteen, or fourteen years before *Father Gratian* came to *Sevil* (there being no mention at that time of *Discalced Carmelites*) she being with her Father and Mother, and two other Neighbours in a certain Room of their house, a *Frier* of our *Order* came in, clad in course cloth (as now they go) and barefoot : they say, he had a look fresh, and venerable, though so old, that his beard looked like silver threads, and long ; who coming near her began to speak to her in a language, which neither she, nor any there understood ; and, having ended his speech, blessed her, crossing her thrice, and saying, *Beartrice, God make thee courageous* : and so departed. None stirred, all the while he staid, but were as it were stupid. Her Father asked her, who he was : she thought, he had known him; when desiring to understand further, they presently rise in great hast to look after him, but he was never seen more. She was exceedingly comforted, and all the rest astonished ; for they saw the thing was of *God* : whereupon they much esteemed her, as was said. All these years (fourteen as I take it) passed since this accident, she continuing still to serve our *Lord*, and beseeching him to accomplish this her desire, being all that while much afflicted.

Afterward, when *Father Hierom Gratian* came thither, she going one day to hear a *Sermon*, that was to be preached in the *Church of Triana*, where her Father dwelt (not knowing that *Father Hierom Gratian* was to preach) seeing him, stopt forth to receive the *Benediction* in that habit, and barefoot, the *Religious Man*, she had formerly seene, occurred straight to her mind, and that his habit was just such ; though his visage, and age differed ; for, *Father Gratian* was not thirty. She told me, that she almost swooned with excellive joy ; for, though she had heard, that a *Coven* was founded in *Triana*, yet she knew not it was of that *Order*. From that time she was desirous to confess to *Father Gratian* ; and *God* would have this also cost her dear ; for, though she went often, he would never take her confession ; because she being yong, and beautifull, *Father Gratian*, like a wary person, declined discouering with such. So, she being

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One day in the *Church* weeping (though much retired) a Woman coming to her asked, what she ailed : she answered, she had long endeavoured to speak with that Father , who was then hearing Confessions, and could not get him to take hers. The good Woman bringing her along with her desired *Father Gratian*, he would hear that Maid ; and so she made a generall Confession to him. He seeing so rich a soule, was exceeding glad; comforted her, and gave her great hopes, that some *Discalced Nuns* would come hither ; when he would soon procure her admission ; and so it was ; for , the first thing he commanded was, that she should be the first, that was received, he being sufficiently satisfied concerning her soule; and so she had notice, when we came thither. She used great care, that her Parents might not know it ; for, they by no means would have yielded to her admission. She was ever wont to go to confession to the *Discalced Fathers*, on whom she bestowed large Alms ; and her parents also, for her sake : and, the *Covent* being somewhat far off, her Mother went not with her, but got other Women to accompany her on such occasions. So she agreed with a Woman, for her eminent good works very well known, and reputed in *Sevil*, for a great servant of *God*, to take her along with her : and the same day of the most *Holy Trinity* [the next *Sunday* after their arrivall at *Sevil*] leaving those Women, that used to accompany her when she went to Confession, she told them, they should stay in a certain place, and she would return again presently : they seeing her in the company of that good servant of *God*, were content, and let her take a Bundle, in which her Habit was hid, and a Cloke of course cloth so that I know not how she could go ; but, with the joy she had , all seemed little, and became easy to her. She only feared , lest any one should hinder her , or examine her , why she went laden so, it being beside her ordinary wont. What doth not the love of *God* do ? how did she already contemne honour , and forget her self, fearing only the being defeated in accomplishing her desire ! In this manner she came to our *Monastery* in *Sevil*, and presently we opened her the gate. I sent afterward to acquaint her Mother with it ; who came straight to us like one distracted, but was soon pacified, and said, she now perceived the grace , *God* had conferred on her Daughter : and though she felt some grief, that she might not speak vvith her, yet vvas it not immoderate , as others use to have ; nay she continued alvvays to give us Alms, as at first.

The *Spouse of Jesus Christ* began to enjoy her so long vvished-for contentement ; so humble, and delirous of doing all the House-business , that vve had much ado to take the Broom out of her hand. She that a little before had in her Fathers house lived in such plenty, and delights, her
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only recreation, and ease (now) was labour. Her joy was such, that in very few days she grew fat; at which her Father, and Mother wondering were so pleased, that afterward they were glad to see her a *Nun*.

Tvvo, or three Months before the time of her being Professed came, that without suffering she might not enjoy so great a good, she had strong temptations; nor that she resolved not to Profess, but it seemed to her a thing very difficult (forgetting the many years, she had patiently sustained in expecting that happiness, she possessed) and the devil so tormented her, that she remained as it were desperate, without being able to help her self. Yet using much force, she so overcame those Temptations, that in their greatest violence, and in the midst of those torments, she determined to Profess. Our Lord, who now intended no longer to try her courage, visited her three days before her Profession, comforting her exceedingly, and drove away the devil. She was so joyed, that, for those three days with excessive delight she seemed almost beside her self; and justly; for the favour was extraordinary. A few days after she entered into the Monastery; her Father died; and her Mother took the Habit in the same House, bestowing all she had in Alms: and so here lived Mother, and Daughter with great contentment, and edification of all the *Nuns*, serving that Lord, from whom they received so eminent a grace. Within less than a year came another young Gentlewoman to be a Nun with great dislike of her Parents: thus our Lord goes on furnishing this his house with persons so desirous of serving him, that no austerity of life, or rule, no solitude whatsoever, or clauiture can deterri them. He be for ever blessed, and praised. Amen.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the FOUNDATION of the MONASTERY of
CARAVACCA.

Being at *S. Joseph* in *Avila*, ready to go to the Foundation of *Veras* already mentioned; for nothing wanted, but to take our Journey; as we were going, came a Messenger sent on purpose by a *Lady* of *Caravacca*, called *Donna Catharina de Ocalora*. There were come to her house (much moved by a Sermon they heard of a *Father* of the *Society of Jesus*) three young Gentlewomen, resolved not to go out thence, till a *Monastery*

Monasteries were erected in the same place. It was, doubtless, a thing agreed on with that *Lady*, who was she, that afterward assisted them in this Foundation. They were well descended; the Daughters of the prime Gentlemen of that place. One of them had her Father living, whose name was *Rodrigo de Moya*, a great servant of God, and of singular prudence. Amongst them they had means enough to attempt such a Work. They had notice of that, which in the founding our houses our *Lord* had done, being informed thereof by some *Fathers* of the Society of *Jesus*, who ever favoured, and assisted us.

When I saw the desire, and fervour of those souls, and that from so remote parts they sent to find out this *Order* of our *Lady of Mount Carmel*, I was much edified therewith, and desired to second their good intention: so, understanding that the Town was near *Veas*, I took along with me more *Nuns* than usually: for (by their letters) it seemed, the business was easy to be concluded; meaning to go thither, when I had finished the Foundation of *Veas*.

But, our *Lord* having determined otherwise, my designes availed little (as is said in the Foundation of *Sevil*) for they had taken the licence of the *Council of Orders*, not such as I desired; so though I was already resolved to go thither, yet for the present I deferred it. True it is, that, enquiring in *Veas*, where this Town stood, and understanding that it was so far off, and the way from thence to it so very bad, that they, who went to visit the Nuns, should endure much trouble, and that it might offend our *Superiors*, I had little left to go to found a *Monastery* there. But yet, because I had put them in hope, I requested *Father Julian a' Avila*, and *Antonio Gaitano* to go thither, and see how the matter was; and if they thought fit, to break off the business. They found it proceed very coldly, not on their part, who were to be *Nuns*, but on the *Lady Caterines*, who was the person, that managed the whole affair, and kept the young *Gentlewomen* in an Apartment by themselves, so that it already looked like a *Monastery* enclosed.

The *Gentlewomen* that were desirous to be *Nuns*, continued so constant to their purpose, especially the two (I mean those, that were admitted to be *Religious*) and they understood so well how to discourse, and treat with *Father Julian* and *Antonio Gaitano*, that they gained them; whereupon, before they departed, they drew up the Writings, leaving them much satisfied: and they, on the other side, so liked both the *Gentlewomen*, and the place, that they highly commended them, and likewise perswaded me the contrary of what was told me concerning the bad way. When I saw the business already concluded, and the licence only delayed,

I dispatched thither again good *Antony Gaitano*, who for my sake willingly underwent all the trouble ; besides that, he and *Father Julian* much defined the Foundation should be finished ; and the truth is, this *Foundation* may be attributed to them ; for, had not they gone thither, and concluded on all, I should have effected little. I wished him to go, and put up a Wheele, and a Grate, in the House appointed for the *Nuns* dwelling, that profession might be taken presently, till a house of their own were found, that was more commodious. He went, and staid there divers days negotiating the busines ; *Rodrigo de Moya*, Father to one of the *Gentlewomen* (as was said) very freely giving us a part of his House. when they had got the Licence, and I was upon my departure thither, I understood, that it had a Clause, that the *Monastery* must be subject to the *Commandatory*, and the *Nuns* yield them Obedience, which I could not approve, being of the *Order* of our *Lady of Carmel* : and so it was to be obtained a new, as it also fell out in the *Foundation* of *Veas*. But the King so far favoured me, that, upon my writing to him, he commanded it should be, as I desired (being at the present *Don Philip the second*, a great Friend, and Patron of the *Religious* that observe their *Rule*) : for, understanding our manner of life in these *Monasteries*, and that we observed the *Primitive Rule*, he had favoured us in all things. And therefore, *Daughters*, I earnestly request you, always to pray particularly for his *Majesty*, as we now do.

Another Journey being to be made by them for a Licence, I departed for *Sevil* by command of *Father Commissary*, who at that time, as also now, was *Father Hieronymus Gratianus de Matre Dei* : and the poor Women continued so that up till the first day of the Year ensuing ; for, they sent the Message to me to *Avila* in *February* before. The Licence was soon got ; but I, being so far off, and so full of troubles, could not presently satisfy them ; and I pitied them, for, they often writ to me in great distres : so that, it seemed, they could not brook delay. But, for me to go then, was impossible ; both in regard it was so far off ; and for that the *Foundation* at *Sevil* was yet unfinished. So, *Father Hierom Gratian the Visitor* concluded, that those *Nuns*, that were to be found there, who remained at *S. Josephs* in *Malagon*, should go, though I went not.

I procured *Anna de Sancto Alberto* to go as *Priores*, who, I was confident, would demean herself very well in that place, being much better than I : so, taking with them all necessary provision, they departed, two of our *Discalceate Fathers* accompanying them ; for, *Father Julian d' Avila* and *Antony Gaitano* were many days before gone back into their own Countrey ; and, they being so far off, and the season so inconvenient

nient (for it was the end of December) I would not send for them. The *Nunns*, being come hither, were with great joy of the people received, especially of those three *Gentlewomen*, that lived so recluse. They founded the Monastery setting up the *B. Sacrament* therein, on the day of the *Circumcision* in the year of our *Lord 1576*. The same day two of those *Gentlewomen* took the Habit; for the third, who was very melancholick (and the being shut-up possibly might have done her hurt, how much more would such austerity, and penance, as we use, have done so?) it was thought fit, should return home, to continue there with a *Sister* of hers. †See my *Daughters*, the Judgments of God, and the obligation, we have to serve him; since he hath done us the favour, to permit us to ther *writ* persevere to the making our Profession; and to live continually in the *House of God*, as *Daughters* of the *Virgin*. Our *Lord* was pleased to make use of the intention of this *Gentlewoman*, and of her estate, for founding this *Monastery*; and afterward at the time when she should enjoy what she so desired, her courage failed her, and a melancholick humour possess her; on which too oft, *Daughters*, we lay the blame of our imperfection, and inconstancy.

His *Divine Majesty* vouchsafe to bestow abundantly his grace on us; for, having this, nothing shall be able to hinder, and obstruct our passing on to advance always further in his service; and protect, and assist us all, that so fair a beginning be not lost by our neglect, as he is pleased should commence from a few Women, so inconsiderable, as we are. In his name I intreat you (my *Sisters*, and *Daughters*) always to request this of our *Lord*; and that each of those that shall succeed be earefull, that this primitive *Rule* of the *Order* of the *Virgin* our *Lady* be renewed in her; and that any the least relaxation therof be never permitted upon whatever account. Consider, that, from trifles, and the smallest matters, the door many times is opened to very great ones; and that, without your perceiving it, ye will be filled with the World. Remember, that that was effected with poverty, and pains, which ye enjoy with rest, and, if ye mark it well, ye shall find, that, for the greater part, these *Monasteries* were not founded by men, but by the all-powerfull hand of *God*: and his *Majesty* is very ready to promote the works, he undertakes, unless we hinder him. Whence, think ye, should a sorry Woman, such as I, have been ever able to have effected so great designes? Being under obedience, having but one farthing then, without any to assist me in any thing? for, my *Brother*, who helped me in the *Foundation* of Sevil was then in the *Indies*. Observe, my *Daughters*, the hand of *God*, because he was not hence induced, for that my *Brother* or I were of Noble Extraction, to do me this honour; but our

our *Lord* brought him thither, effecting, that he should both have Goods, a Desire, and a pious Soul, that in somthing he might help me. Which way soever ye consider it, ye will find it was the Work of *God*: no reason therefore, that we in any thing diminish our *Rule*, though it cost us our life, honour, and quiet; the rather, because here we have all these together. For, Life is, to live in such sort, as not to fear death, nor all the adverse accidents of life, and to continue in that constant chearfulnes, which you now possells, and in that prosperity, greater than which cannot be, to wit, the not fearing, nay desiring, Poverty. Againe, what is there that can be compared with the internall, and externall peace, and quiet, wherein you continually live. It is in your own hand, and power, either to live, or dy with this quiet; as we have seen them dy, who ended their days in these *Monastryes*. Be confident, if ye continually beg of *God*, to carry this busines on forward, and rely not in any thing upon your selves, he will not deny you his Mercy; so ye trust in him, and be of an undaunted mind; for, this our *Lord* prizeth exceedingly. Fear not the lack of any thing; nor ever refuse to admit those that come to be made *Nuns* (if ye like their inclinations, and parts) for want of means, or portions; so they come to serve *God* in greater perfection; nor yet, for wanting the goods of fortune, when they have the accomplishments of Virtue; because *God*, on the other side, upon the admitting one such, will send you double what ye need. Of this I have great experience: his *Majesty* well knows, (that as near as I can remember) I never refused to receive any for such defect; provided, that the rest liked me. Witnes those many, who have been received meerly for the love of *God*, as the rest of you do well know. And I can assur you, that those, whom I received with great portions, have not yielded me so much Comfort; as those whom I took in meerly for *Gods* sake: nay I have had a fear of those, when as the poor have dilated my heart and spirit, and afforded me such excessive content, as hath made me weep for joy: this is truth. Now if, when as yet either Houses were to be bought, or built, he hath so seasonably assisted us herein, why should he not also, since our having whereon to live? Believe me, *Daughters*, by what ye think to gain, by it ye will lose. When therefore I lie, that would be a *Nunn*, hath wealth, and no obligations otherwise, she doth well to bestow it in Alms on you, for why should she give it others, who perhaps need it not? I profess seriously, to me it would seem an unkindness, not to do it. But always beware, that she, who is admitted a *Nun*, dispose of her estate, as the learned shall advise, is more for *Gods* service; because it would be a great shame, that we should receive any ones means that is admitted, but with reference to this end. We gain more in her performing her duty toward

ward God (I mean with greater perfection) than in all, she can bring with her ; since we pretend to nothing (neither let his *Divine Majesty* ever suffer it to be otherwise) but that God be served in every thing, and by every thing. And, though I be a miserable Wretch (I speak it to his honour, and glory, and that ye may rejoice at the manner, wherein these Houses of his were founded) neither in managing them, nor in anything, that concerned them , would I have done an unlawfull act in any wise , by swerving at all from this intention, though I had conceived, I should have succeeded prosperously therein ; nor have I done ought (I mean in these Foundations) which I knew in the least deviated from the will of God : but was always governed by the direction of my *Confessors*, who ever have been (since I was employed herein) men very learned, and servants of God ; nor (to my remembrance) had I any other thought. Perhaps I am deceived, and have done many such things, that I knew not, and my imperfections are numberless. This our *Lord*, who is the true *Judge*, knows of me (speaking of my self, as far as I can understand) and I also plainly discerne, that this proceeded not from me , but from Gods good pleasure, that such a work should be done ; and, it being his own, he afflited me, and did me this favour : for, to this purpose I mention it, my *Daughters*, that ye may know, ye are exceedingly obliged to him for it ; and that these Houses hitherto have not been founded with any ones annoyance. He be blessed, who hath done all ; awaking the charity of those, that helped us. His *Divine Majesty* vouchsafe ever to protect us, and grant us grace, never to prove ingratefull for such favours. *Amen.*

Thus, *Daughters*, ye have seen some troubles already sustained (though I believe, these I have written, are the least part ; for, were they particularly recounted, it would have been tedious, and endless) both of journeys, and of rains, snows, and losing our way : and, above all, many times with so little health, that it hath fallen out (I know not, whether I have mentioned it) as in the first days journey, that we went from *Malagon* to *Veas*, that I have travelled with a fever upon me, and so many diseases, together, that I was amazed, how I could go : and being in this condition I remembred our Father *Elias*, when he fled from *Jeſabel*, and said, *Lord how can I bear this ? Do you consider it.* The truth is ; his *Majesty*, seeing me so miserable, and feeble, immediatly took away my fever, and that extremity of pain : though first I thought, that this fell out so, because a *Priest*, a great servant of God, was come to me (and perhaps he might be the cause) however at that instant all my ilnells both internall, and externall suddenly left me. When I had recovered my health, I chearfully endured bodily labour ; but the complying with the different humours of many,

as in every place was requisite, proved no small trouble : as likewise the leaving my Daughters, and Sisters (whom I so dearly loved) when I was to go from one place to another, I tell you , was to me no les Crofs : especially when I considered, I was never to see them more, and perceived their sad resentment thereof, and their tears ; for, though they were weaned from all other things, our *Lord* had not given them this : perhaps that it might be a greater torment to me ; for, (methought) neither was I weaned from them ; though I strove, all I could, not to shew it ; nay blamed it ; but it little availed ; because the love, they bear me is exceeding great, and plainly discerned by divers instances to be sincere : Ye are likewise to understand, that these *Houses* were erected not only with our most *Reverend Father Generall's* Leave, but also by his injunction, and Command : and not merely this ; but , concerning each *Monastery*, that was founded, he writ to me, that he received very great content , when the forementioned were all erected : and indeed, the greatest joy, I could take in my troubles, was, to see the satisfaction, I gave him : it seeming to me, that therein I served our *Lord*, he being my *Superior* ; and besides that , one, I much love.

Whether it pleased *God* to give me some rest ; or displeased the devill, that so many *Monasteries* were built, wherein our *Lord* was served, here our founding stopped: not by the good liking of *Father Generall*, as is sufficiently known: for when I entreated him not to enjoin me the founding more *Monasteries* , he replied, that I should found as many , as I had hairs on my head : and it is not long, since he writ thus to me. Before I left *Sevil*, from the *General Chapter* that was held (wherein one would think, the increasing of an *Order* might pas for a great service) came a command from the *Definitors*, not only that I should found no more *Monasteries*, but chuse me One that I liked, to live in, without ever going out of it on any pretence ; which is a kind of emprisonment. For, there is no *Nun*, whom, on necessary occasions, for the *Orders* benefit, the *Provincial* may not command to go from one place to another (I mean, from one *Monastery*, to another) : and the worst was, our *Father Generall* was now displeased with me (for, this was it, that afflicted me) upon no ground, but the information of some passionate persons. Together with this they at the same time charged me with two other very gross accusations

I tell it you, *Sisters*, that ye may see the Mercy of Almighty God, and how our *Lord* forsakes not them, that desire to serve him : for, this not only not troubled, but so exceedingly delighted me, that I could not contain : so that I wonder not at that, wch *King David* did, when he danc'd

ced before the *Ark of the Lord*; for, I would not at that time willingly have done any thing else; such was my joy, as I knew not how to concle it. The reaon I understand not; for, in other great Crofes from murmurings, and contradictions, which I sustained, never any such thing befell me: and even one of those things they reported of me was most insufferable. For, that of prohibiting me to found, saving the displeasure of the most Reverend Father Generall, was a great eale to me: having often desired to close my life in peace, and quietnes: although they, who caused this, had no such intention, but rather the doing me the greatest displeasure in the world; however, possibly, they had other good purposes therein. Somtimes likewise the great oppositions, injuries, and murmurings, which I suffered in founding, some moved with a good intention; others, with other ends affodded me consolation, but I remember not, that ever I felt such a joy, as this, in any affliction, that befell me. I confess, at some other time, any of the three things, which were at once laid on me, would have much troubled me. I conceive, my extraordinary joy arose from imagining, that, since the Creatures paid me in this coin, I did place my satisfaction in the *Creator*. For, I have ever thought, and clearly understand it, that whoever takes delight in earthly things, or humane applause, is extremely cozened; because, besides the little benefit we have [were it constant]; the men of this World are of one mind to day, and of another to morrow; and what one while they commend, they presently alter, and disparage. Bleſſed be thou, O Lord, my God, who art eternally immutable, Amen. Whoever serves thee to the end, shall live without end in a bleſſed Eternity.

I began to write these *Foundations* at the command of Father Dr. Rypalda of the Society of Jesus (as I said in the beginning) who was then Rector of the Colledge in Salamanca, to whom at that time I confessed, living in the glorious S. Josephs Monastery in that City, in the year 1573. Some of them I had writ, and then by multiplicity of busines left off, not meaning to proceed further, because I confessed no longer to the said Father, by reason that we were in severall far distant Countries; and also, because of the many, and great Troubles, which that, which I have written, hath cost me; although, it having been always by my Superior's command, I reckon my pains well bestowed. Being much bent hereon, the Apollonick Commissary Father Dr. Fr. Hierom Gratian de Mare Dei enjoyned me to finish them. I told him the litle leisure, I had, and severall busineses, that lay upon me (which, out of litle obedience, I said to him) for, besides other indispositions I endured, it tired me exceedingly: notwithstanding he commanded me, by litle and litle, and as I could,

could, to finish them ; so I have done it ; submitting my self in every thing, and requesting, that, what is found therein said amis, may be expunged ; since, what to me seems the best, may prove the worst. So, it is finished to day, being *S. Eugenius's Vigil*, the 14. of November 1576. in *S. Josephs Monastery at Toledo*, where I now am, by command of *Father Fr. Hieron Gratiæ de Matre Dei, Commissary Apostolick*, who at present is *Superior of the Discalceates, Men and Women of the primitive Rule* ; as likewise *Visitor of those of the Rule Mitigated in Andaluzia*, to the glory and honour of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, who reignes, and shall reigne Eternally. Amen.

For the love of our *Lord*, I intreat the *Sisters*, that shall read this Book, to recommend me to his *Divine Majesty*, that he may take pity on me, and deliver me from the pains of *Purgatory*, if I shall deserve to be there, and grand I may enjoy him. And because, whilst I live, ye are not to see this, let me reap after Death some benefit for the pains, and weariness sustained in writing it, and the great desire, I writ it with, to hit right in saying somthing, that may afford you consolation, if they think fit to let you read it,

Being at *S. Josephs in Avila* on the *Vigil of Pentecost* in the *Hermitage of Nazareth*, considering an eminent favour our *Lord* had done me twenty years since, or thereabout, on the like day, a great impetuosity, and fervour of spirit seized me, which entranced me. In this great recollection, I understood from our *Lord* that, which I will now relate, that I should tell the *Fathers Discalceate* from him ; *That they should endeavour to observe four things, which whilst they observed, their ORDER should go on increasing ; but, failing therein, they might be sure, it declined, and degenerated from its Original.* *First* ; *that the SUPERIORs should agree, and hold together.* *Secondly* ; *that, though it was expedient, they should have many COVENTS ; yet, in each, but few FRIERS.* *Thirdly* ; *that they should converse little with secular persons ; and that little, for the good of their Souls.* *Fourthly* ; *that thy should teach rather by Works, than Words.* This was in the year 1579. and for a signall Truth I averr it, and subscribe it with my Name.

TERESA DE JESU.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the FOUNDATION of the MONASTERY of
VILLANOVA.

The Foundation of Sevil being finished, the Founding was forborn for above four years, by reason of great, and terrible Persecutions, that unexpectedly arose against the *Discalceates* of both Sexes: for, though heretofore they had suffered much, yet not in that extremity; for the Persecution grew to that pass, as utterly to ruine the *Reformation*,

The Devill discovered sufficiently, how much this holy Beginning, laid by our *Lord*, displeased him; and knew, by its spreading, it was *His Work*. The *Discalced Friars* suffered much, especially the *Superiors* of them, from the heavy accusations, and oppositions of almost all the Fathers of the *Mitigated Rule*. These had so informed our most *Reverend Father Generall*, that, although he were very holy, and he, that had given the licence for founding all the *Monasteries*, except that of *S. Joseph* at *Avila*, which was the first, and was erected by leave from the *Pope*, he much urged, and insisted on it, that the *Friars Discalced* might proceed no further (for to the *Nuns Monasteries* he was ever favorable) and, because I assited herein, they disgraced Me with him, which was the greatest cross, I endured in these Foundations, though I have sustained many, and great ones. For, on one side, many eminently learned, to whom I confessed, liked not my desisting from promoting, and furthering a Work, which I evidently saw was acceptable, and conduced to the service of our *Lord*, and increase of our *Order*. On the other side, to go against that, which I saw was my *Generall's command*, was a kind of Death to me; for, besides my obligation to him, by being such a one, I loved him very dearly, and it was but my Duty. The truth is, that, though I had a mind to pleasure him therein, I could not; because I had *Apostolicall Visitors*, whom I must necessarily obey. Meanwhile dies the *Pope's Nunzio*, a great lover of virtue, and consequently a speciall friend, and favourer of the *Discalceates*. Another succeeded, sent, it seems by *God*, to exercise our patience: he was somewhat allied to the *Pope*; and doubtless a Servant of *God*; only he began to take much into his thoughts the protecting the *Fathers Calceate*; and, agreeably to the informations, which these gave him of us, he imagined strongly, that it was fit, these

beginnings should go no further : hereupon he began to put his designe, and intention in execution with extreme rigour , condemning, imprisoning, and banishing those, who, he conceived, might make some resiance to him.

See chap.
31.

Those, who suffered most, were, *Father Antonia de Jesu*, who began the first *Covent* of the *Discalced*; and *Father Hieron Gratiæ*, whom the former *Nuncio* had made *Apostolicall Visitor* of the *Fathers Calceate*: the chief displeasure, he took, was against him, and against *Father Marian de Sancto Benedicto*. Who these *Fathers* were, I have declared in the preceding *Foundations*; others likewise of the more principal he punished, though not so severely : he prohibited these, under sharp Censures, the managing any businels. It was sufficiently manifest, that all came from *God*, and that his *Majesty* permitted it for a greater good; and that these *Father's* Vertue might be more conspicuous ; as it was. He appointed for *Visitor* one of the *Mitigated Fathers*, that he should visit our *Monasteries*, as well of *Nuns*, as *Friers*; which, had it succeeded, as he imagined, might have proved a great *Cross*; though in effect we suffered exceedingly, as shall be written by one that knows how better to express it, than I. I do but glance hereat, that the *Nuns* who come after may understand, how much they are bound to advance forward in perfection, since they find plain, and easy, what hath cost those now living dear ; some of them having suffered at that time exceeding heavy and false *Calumnies*; which caused in me great compassion, and afflicted me incomparably more, than what I felt my self (nay this much pleased me rather) : it seemed to me, that I was the cause of all this tempest, and that, had they cast me into the Sea, as *Jonas* was, it would have ceased. Praised, and blessed be *God*, who defends the truth. And so it fell out here; for, when the King, *Don Philip II.* understood what had passed, being informed of the Life, and Virtue of the *Discalceates*, he so condescended to protect us, that he would not have the *Nuncio* alone judge our cause, but allotted him four *Assessors*, grave Persons, three of them *Religious Men*, for the better examining the Justice of our Case. One of these was *Father Dr. Peter Fernandez*, a Person of very holy life, eminent learning, and great authority ; he had been *Apostolick Commissary*, and *Visitor* of the *Relaxed Fathers* of the *Province of Castile*; to whom we *Discalced* also were subject : He very well understood the truth ; how both the one, and the other lived ; for, all ours desired nothing else, but to have this known. So, when I saw the King had nominated Him for our Judge, I accounted the businels as good as done ; as, through *Gods Mercy*, it now is. His *Divine Majesty* grant, it be to his honour, and glory. Although many *Bishops*

Bishops, and prime Lords of the Kingdom procured with great solicitude to inform the *Nuncio* of the truth, yet all this little availed, had not God used the King as an Instrument. We are all, Sisters, exceedingly bound to recommend him always in our prayers to our *Lord*; and to pray for them who have protected this *House* of his, and of the *Virgin* our *Lady*; and so I recommend them much to you. You see now, Sisters, in what case I was to find any more: in our *Monasteries* we were all taken up continually with Prayers, and Penances, that our *Lord* would promote what was already begun, if it were to his service.

In the beginning of these great Troubles, which I have so briefly recounted (and haply will seem few to you; but, being for so long a time sustained, were very many) I being at *Toledo*, come from the *Foundation* of *Sevil*, in the year 1576. a *Priest* of *Villanova de la Xara* brought me letters from the *community* of the Town, and came to conferr with me about receiving for *Nuns*, and building them a *Monastery* there, Nine Women, that were got together in an *Hermitage* of the glorious *S. Ann*, which had on the side of it a little house, wherein they had lived for some years, and that with such recollection, and sanctity, as induced all the people thus to procure the completion of their Desires. A *Doctor* also writ to me, *Curate* of the place, called *Augustine de Ervias*, a learned man, and of great Virtue: he aided them, what he could, in this holy Work. It seemed to me a thing no way fit, for these reasons following. First; because it was, methought, a matter very difficult, for persons, already enured so many years to their own way of living, to conform to that of our *Order*. Secondly; because they could scarce maintain themselves, and the Town is little more than a thousand families; where, to live on Alms is small relief; for, though the *Community* offered to maintain them, it was not like to last. Thirdly; they had no House. Fourthly; it was far off from our other *Monasteries*. And, though they told me, they were very virtuous Women, yet having not seen them, I could not judge, whether they had those qualifications, we require in our *Monasteries*: and so I purposed to do nothing at all therein. But first I would communicate it to my *Confessor*, who was *Doctor Velazquez, Canon*, and *Professor* at *Toledo*, a man very learned, and virtuous, the now *Bishop* of *Osma*: for I ever use, not to do any thing on my own head, but by advice of such persons. When he saw the letters, and understood the busyness, he bade me, not wholly to dismiss it, but make them a civil answer; because, since *God* conjoined so many hearts together in the same design, it argued, he intended to be served thereby: I so ordered matters, that I neither absolutely accepted, nor relinquished it.

Whilst

Whilst the People continued their importunity, and procured the mediation of severall for my admitting it, it passed on to the year 1580. and it ever seemed to me impertinent, to admit this *Monastery*; yet when I returned my Answer, I could not give an ill one, nor utterly exclude it.

It fell out, that *Father Antonio de J^esu* came to finith his Banishment in a *Covent* of our *Lady of Succour's*, which is Nine miles from *Villanova*, whither he went to preach: and the *Father Prior* of this *Covent* (who at present is *Father Gabriel of the Assumption*, a very discreet person, and great Servant of *God*) accompanied him, and that very willingly, being both intimate acquaintance of *Dr. Ervias*. On this occasion they began to conferr with those holy *Sisters*, and were so satisfied concerning their Vertue, and so far disposed, and perswaded by the people, and the *Dr.* that they made this their own busines, and very effectually began to urge me to admit this *Foundation*. And I being in a *Monastery* of ours of *S. Josephs* at *Malagon* above seventy miles distant from *Villanova*, the same *Father Prior* came on purpose to speak with me, giving me an account how it was feasible; and that, after it was founded, *Dr. Ervias* would bestow on it three hundred Crowns a year out of a *Living*, he had, procuring leave from *Rome*. This I made little reckoning of, as seeming to me a matter not effectible, nor lasting(though this being done, together with that little which they possessed, was full enough) and so I gave *Father Prior* divers reasons, that he might see, it was not expedient to ffound it, and, in my judgment, seeming very sufficient. Last of all I bade him, that he, and *Father Antonio de J^esu* should consider well of it; for I left it upon their Consciences; conceiving, what I said to him, enough to dash that design. After he was gone, I reflected, how hot he was for erecting it, and that he might perswade our present *Superior* thereto, *Father Dr. Angelo de Salazar* of the *Relaxed Carmelites*: and thereupon I presently writ to him, desiring him to grant no such licence, for the reasongs, I mentioned: so, he answered, He would not, unless I approved thereof.

Some six Weeks passed, or somwhat more, when, I conceiving the busines quite laid aside, lo, a Messenger comes to me with letters from the *Community*, Whereby they engaged, to provide them necessaries; and *Doctor Ervias*, to perform, what he had promised: I received also letters from those two *Reverend Religious Men*, importunately presling, and requesting me. I was so afraid to admit these *Sisters*, because I thought some faction, and opposition against those, that should go thither, would certainly follow, as ordinarily happens; and likewise, because I saw no certainty for their maintenance; (for that, which they offered, was not

of

of a forcible obligation) that I fell into a great confusion, and perplexity. I perceived afterward, it was the devill ; because, though our *Lord* had given me courage enough, yet I was then so pusillanimous, that methought, I had no confidence at all in *God*. But at length the prayers of those holy Servants of *God* prevailed.

One day after *Communion*, and recommending it to our *Lord*, as I did often ; for, that which first moved me to make a good Answer, was a fear, lest I might hinder the proficiency of some Souls . (because all my desire was ever, to find out some means, whereby our *Lord* might be praised , and that there might be some to serve him in greater perfection) his *Majesty* gave me a sharp reprebension , saying : *With what treasures have the Monasteries been built, that hitherto were founded ? Never doubt the admitting this house, which will turn to my great service, and the benefit of Souls.* O how powerfull and efficacious are the words of *God* ! for, the understanding not only apprehends them, but is thereby enlightened , to know the truth ; and the will disposed, to be willing to execute them. So it beset me here ; for, I not only willingly admitted this *Monastery*, but, methought , I did ill in suffering my self to be swayed with humane reasons ; having seen that , which by means of this *holy Order* his *Majesty* hath effected, so to transcend all Reason. Now being resolved to admit this *Foundation*, I conceived , it would be necessary for me to go thither with those *Nuns*, that were to stay there, for divers reasons, that presented themselves to me, though my nature relucted much, because I came to *Malagon* very sick, and so continued still. But , knowing, *God* was thereby to be served , I gave an account thereof to my *Superior* , desiring him to appoint , what he thought best. He sent me a licence , and command , to go thither in person, and be present , taking with me such *Nuns* , as I best liked : which put me into great solicitude, being to chuse such, as could live with those, that were there already : Recommending this much to our *Lord*, I took one for *Priores* & out of the *Monastery* of S. *Josepb* in *Toledo*, and two out of that of *Malagon*; one of them for *Sub-priores* : and it , being so earnestly recommended to our *Lord*, succeeded very prosperously, which here I accounted no small favour ; for in those *Foundations*, which begin from our selves only , all things become well accommodated.

Father *Anthonio de Jesu*, and Father *Prior Gabriel of the Assumption* came to fetch us. The people having furnished us with necessaries , we left *Malagon* the Saturday before *Lent* , the 13. of *February*, in the year 1580. I found my self in travelling so well, that , methought , I was never sick : and much wondering at it , I considered, how much it imports

⁵ Anna
de Maire
Dei Elvi-
ra de Sto.
Angela.

Anna de
St. Adg-
nino Con-
stantia
St. Crucis
Her Com-

panian
(that ne-
ver went
from her)
was Anna
de S. Bar-
not Isoloma.

not to regard our want of health , when opportunities of serving *God* present themselves, whatever opposition lies before us ; since he is able , of weak , to make us strong ; of sickly, healthy ; and, when he will not do so, then is it best for our souls, to suffer : for, why is life , and health given us, save to lose in the service of so great a *King* , and *Lord* ; and, keeping our eyes fixed on his honour , to forget our selves? Believe me, *Sisters*, ye will never take harm, nor lose, by going this way. I confess to you, my wickedness, and weakness hath oft made me fear , and doubt ; yet I remember not, since our *Lord* gave me the habit of a *Discalceate*, and some years before, but that of his mercy he gave me grace to overcome these Temptations, and to enure my self to embrace, what I knew most conduced to his Service , how difficult soever. I perceive plainly, how little that was, I did on my part ; but *God* desires no more , than such a resolution from us, for to do afterward the whole thing himself on his part. Be he for ever blessed. *Amen.*

We were to pass by the *Monsastery* of our *Lady of Succour*, mentioned before , which was nine Miles from *Villanova*, and there to stay, and give notice; that we were come near, it being so before agreed on : and it was fit, I should in all obey those *Fathers*, we went with. This *Covens* stands in a *Desert* , and very pleasing solitude ; and, when we drew nigh, the *Religious* came out to receive their *Prior* in decent Order. As these went in this *Procession* barefoot, and with their poor *Clotes* of course cloth, they caused devotion in us all ; and I especially felt great tenderness, imagining my self then to be in that flourishing Age of our *Holy Fathers*. They seemed in that field so many odoriferous White Flowers ; and such I believe they are in *Gods* sight ; for, in my opinion, he is very faithfully served there. They went to the *Church* saying *Te Deum laudamus* with voices much mortified. The Passage to the *Church* is under ground, as through a Grott, which represented that of our holy *Father Elias*. Indeed I fel so great inward joy, that I would have accounted a far longer Journey very well bestowed : though I was exceeding sorry for the Death of the *Blessed Cardona*, by whose means *God* founded this *Covens*; in regard I had not the happiness to see Her , though much desiring it.

I conceive it not amisse here , to relate somthing of her Life , and by what means our *Lord* would have this *Covens* founded there, which hath been so exceedingly advantageous to many souls of the places adjoining, as I have been informed ; and likewise, that, beholding the great Penance of this *Saint* , ye may see, my *Sisters* , how short We come thereof ; and may reinforce your selves afreh to serve our *Lord* : Since there is no reason

reason, why we should be behind Her, who descend not from so Noble a Stock; for, though that signify nothing, I mention it, because she lived in abundant plenty, suitable to her quality, extracted from the *Dukes of Cardona*; whence she was called *Donna Catharina de Cardona*: but, after she betook her self to penance, writing sometimes to me, she subscribed only, *The Sinner*. Concerning her Life, before God did her so eminent favours, they will acquaint you better, who shall undertake particularly to write of it; there being many passages in it worth relating. But, lest haply such thing should not come to your knowledge, I will recite of it here, what certain persons, deserving credit, who conversed, and treated with her, have told me. This *Saint*, living amongst personages, and *Lords* of great quality, had extraordinary care of her soul, and did much penance. She had an extream desire of retiring some whither, that she might enjoy God alone, and wholly apply her self to penance, without any one's disturbing her.

Hereof she conferred with her *Confessors*, who consented not thereto. For, the World being now so set upon discretion, and humane prudence, without remembring the extraordinary priviledges, and favours, God did the *Saints* of both Sexes, that served him in the Desert, I wonder not, that they thought it an Extravagancy. But, since his *Majesty* failes not to favour sincere desires, for putting them in execution, he provided, that she went to Confession to a Father of the *Order of S. Francis*, called *Fr. Francis de Torres*, Whom I know very well, and hold for a *Saint*: he hath lived many years with great zeale of Penance, and Prayers, sustaing likewise many, and sore persecutions. Doubtless, he throughly understood the favours, God doth such, as dispose themselves in earnest to receive them: and thereupon bade her not deferr, or procrastinate, but courageously follow the call of his *Divine Majesty*. I know not, whether these were the precise Words; but such we may conjecture them, since she presently put them in execution.

She declared her mind to a *Hermit* that lived at *Alcala*, intreating him to conduct her to a place, without acquainting any therewith. They came where this *Covent* is, and found there a little Caverne, that would scarce hold her, and there the Hermite left her. But, what an excess of Love brought her thither? since she took no care for her Diet, nor of the dangers that might follow, nor of the infamy, she might incur with people, when no where appearing. How inebriated with the love of God must this holy Soul needs be? wholly absorpt; and anxious, lest any should hinder her of enjoying her sweet *Spouse*; and how resolute to have no more acquaintance with any thing of the World? for, thus she deprived

her self of all the delights, it could afford her: Let us consider this well, *Sisters*, and observe, how at one blow she overcame all: for, though it be not less, which, by entring into this holy *Order*, ye perform, offering to *God* your whole *Will*, and professing solitude, and perpetuall *Clausure*, yet I know not whether afterward these first fervours may decay in some, and we again in some things become subject to self-love. His *Divine Majesty* grant, it prove not so: but that, imitating this *Saint* in outwardly quitting the *World*, we may also for our interior in all things keep far from it.

I have heard many things of the great austerity of her life, whereof, it is likely, the least part is known; because living so many years in that Solitude, with extreme desires of doing *Penance*, without any to restrain her, doubtless she used her Body very severely. I will relate, what some persons, and particularly our *Nuns* of *S. Joseph* in *Toledo*, whom she went to see, have heard from her self; who, as she discoursed with the *Sisters* in simplicity, (for so did she also with other persons, her candor, and sincerity being singular) so questionles she must do it with great humility; for, as one who well knew, there was nothing good in her that was hers, she was far from all vain glory, and delighted to tell the favours, and graces *God* did her; that, for these, his holy Name might be praised, and glorified. A thing very dangerous for those, who have not arrived thus far, because at least it may prove a Temptation to them, or a blazoning of their own praise: but her integrity, and holy Simplicity cleared her herein; for I never heard her taxed of any such defect. She said, she lived eight Years in that *Cave*, and passed many days only with roots, and herbes of the field: for, when the three loaves were eaten, which he who accompanied her left with her, she had nothing, till accidentally a shepheard went by, who afterward supplied her with Bread, and Meale; for, her Diet was certain little Cakes baked by the Sun, and nothing else; and this every three days: the truth hereof is also avouched by the *Religious* that live here. She was so spent with such immoderate fasting, that, when she went about the erecting a *Covent*, and they made her sometimes eat a little Herring, or such like things, she rather got hurt, than good thereby. She never drank Wine, that I heard of. She disciplined her self with a sharp Chain, and continued it many times two hours, or an hour and half. Her Hair-clothes she wore, were extreme rigid, and pricking; for a certain Woman, which returning from pilgrimage lodged with her, told me, that, pretending to be asleep, she saw her put off her Cilices full of blood, and cleanse them. That was more, she suffered from the devills (as she related to those *Nuns*, I mentioned).

mentioned) who appeared to her in the shape of Mastive Dogs, very big, and terrible, leaping upon her shoulders, and otherwhiles like Snakes : but she feared them not at all. After she had founded the *Covent*, yet she still lived there, and lodged in her *Grott* : never going out, except when she went to the *Church-Service*: and, before the *Covent* was founded, she went to hear *Mass* at a *Church* of the *Fathers de la Merced*, which was a Mile off, and somtimes on her knees. Her Clothes were of the naturall colour, her Inner garment of Sacking, made so, that all thought her a man. After she had lived there solitary so many years, our *Lord* would have the fame of her Sanctity divulged ; whereupon out of devotion, and the good opinion, they had of her, she was continually visited, so that she could not free her self from the people. She spake with charity, and love to all ; the concourse of people daily increased ; and happy he, that could speak with her. She was so tired, and disgusted herewith, that she would say, they killed her. It was scarce Day, but the field was all full of Coaches : and from about the time the *Religious* began to live there, they had no other remedy thereof, save to lift her up on high, to give them all her Blessing, and so free them selves from the throng. After she had been eight Years in this Cave (which by those, that went to see her, was enlarged) she fell into an extreme sicknes, of which she thought she should dy ; yet, for all her disease, she would still continue in that *Grott* with admirable patience.

She began to have a great desire to erect a *Covent* of *Religious* there ; and thus she continued some time, not knowing what *Order* to have it of. When being once in prayer before a *Crucifix*, which she always carried with her, our *Lord* shewed her a white Cloke ; by which she understood, it was to be of *Discalced Carmelites*, she formerly never having any notice of them, or that they vvere at all in the World : and there vvere then only tvvo *Covents* founded, that of *Manzera*, and that of *Pastrana*. She had questionles informed her self hereof ; and hearing that there vvras one in *Pastrana*, having in times past maintained great correspondence vvith the Princess of *Evoli*, vvhile to Prince *Ruy Gomez*, Lord of *Pastrana*, thither she event to procure the erecting this *Covent*, vvhich she so much desired. There in *S. Peters Church* (for so 'tis called) in the *Covent* of *Pastrana*, she took the Habit of our *Lady*, though not vvith a purpose to be a *Nun*, or *Professed* ; for she had never had any inclination thereto, because our *Lord* guided her by another way : she thought that Obedience might deprive her of her intended austerity , and beloved solitude.

She received the Habit of our *Lady of Carmel*, all the *Religious* being
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present. There was *Fr. Marian de Santo Benedicto*, mentioned in the former Foundations, who told me, he had then a great Suspension, and Rapt, that quite alienated him from his senses: and, being thus, he saw many *Friers*, and *Nuns* dead, some beheaded, others with their legs, and arms cut off, according as they were Martyred; for, this was intimated in that Vision: and he is one, that would not speak it, unless he saw it; nor is his spirit wont to have such suspensions; *God* not leading him by that way. Pray to *God*, my *Sisters*, that it prove true, and that we may deserve, in our times, so great a Blessing, that we be also of that Number. The holy *Cardona* began from *Pastrana* to procure means for making her *Covent*; to this purpose she went to the *Court*, which she so willingly forsook (this being no small cross to her) where she wanted not many murmurings and troubles. For, when she was abroad, she could not get from the Crowd, and this befell her where ever she went; some cut her Habit, others her Cloke. Then she went to *Toledo*, where she lodged with our *Nuns*. They all affirmed to me, that the fragancy was so great which issued from her Body, that even her Habit, and Girdle, after she left it off (for they took it away, and gave her another) kept that smell; a thing which exceedingly moved them to praise our *Lord*: and, the nearer they came to her, the greater was the scent; though her Clothes were such, as by reason of the extreme heat then, they should rather have stunk. I know, they would not have said it, had it not been all truth; whereupon they conceived great devotion. At *Court*, and other places, she got much Alms for building the *Covent*; and, procuring a licence, it was founded. The *Church* was built, where her *Grott* was, and they made her another apart out of the way, where was a Sepulchre made of embossed work; and there she spent most of her time, night, and day. This lasted not long; because she lived not above five years and a half after founding the *Covent*: for, considering that her life then so austere, and full of penance, and how much of it had passed before, it seemed a thing supernaturall, that she lasted so long. Her death followed in the year 1577. and her Funerall was kept (as I understand) with great Solemnyt: for a Gentleman, called *Don John de Leone* spent liberally thereon. She lies nowv buried in a Tomb vvithin a Chappell of our *Lady's*, to whom she vvas singularly devoted, till a Larger *Church*, than that at present is, be built, to interr her blessed Body in, as is fit. For her sake this *Covent* is had in great Veneration: so that, it seems, the same devotion continues still in it, and in all this Situation, especially in beholding that solitude, and *Grott*, where she lived, before the *Covent* vvas built. They assured me, she was so wearied, and afflicted, to see the great multitude, that came to visit her, that she

she would have gone into another Country a farr off, whete none might take notice of her ; and that, for this purpose, she sent for the *Hermite*, that brought her thither, to remove, and convey her to another place : but found, He was dead. Our *Lord* having determined, that this *Church*, and *Coverte* should be erected to his *B. Mothers* honour, suffered her not to go away from it ; He being (as I hear) greatly served here. The *Religious* are piously, and rightly disposed, which is evident by their exterior, how much they delight to be separated, and sequestred from the world : especially the *Prior*, whom our *Lord* took even from great conveniences, and delights, to assume the habit, but hath amply recompenced him, by converting his secular-regalos into spirituall. They shewed us much kindness here, giving us for the use of the *Foundation* what they had to spare in the *Church* : for, this holy Woman being beloved of so many eminent persons, the *Church* aforesaid was well provided of furniture. I received extraordinary consolation all the time I was there, though to my great confusion ; which also continues still : because I saw she, that had there done so severe Penance, was a Woman like me, and more tender, being of such quality, but not so great a Sinner, as I ; for, herein is no comparison beswixt Her, and me ; and I have received much greater favours from our *Lord* in many kinds ; his Mercy being most abundant in not having hitherto thrown me into Hell, as my most heinous sins deserved. Only the desire of amendment comforts me ; yet not much ; because my whole life is run out in Desires, and Works I do none. The infinite Mercy of *God* in whom I have always trusted, succour me, through the Merits of his most holy *Son*, and of the *Virgin our Lady*, whose habit (by the bounty of our *Lord*) I wear.

One day, after I had communicated in that holy *Church*, a very great Recollection befell me, with a Suspension, that took away my fences. In it by an Intellectual Vision was represented to me this holy *Woman*, as a body glorified, and some *Angels* with her, bidding me, *Not grow weary, but endeavour to go on in these Foundations*. I understood, though she did not signify so much, that she assisted me with our *Lord*. She told me also another thing, which there is no occasion, I should write. I was much comforted, and desired troubles exceedingly ; and I hope in the goodness of our *Lord*, by so acceptable assistance ; as this *Saint's* prayers, I shall be able in somthing to serve him. Ye see here, my *Daughters*, and *Sisters*, how soon those her Troubles are ended ; when as the Glory, she now enjoys, shall last for ever : let us now force our selves, for the love of our *Lord*, to follow the steps of this our *Sister*, debasing our selves, as she did : for, we shall quickly come to our journy's end, since all passeth away.

We

We arrived at *Villanova de la Xara* the first *Sunday in Lent*, the 21 of *February*, on the *Vigil of S. Peters Chair*, and the day of *S. Barbatus* in the year 1580. The same day was set up the most *Holy Sacrament* in the *Church of the Glorious S. Ann*, about the time of high *Maj's*. There came forth that whole *Corporation*, and some others with *Dr. Ervias* to receive us: and we alighted at the *Parish-Church*, which was a good way from *S. Ann's*.

So great was the joy of all the people, that it afforded me much consolation, to see how cheerfully they received the *Order of the B. Virgin our Lady*. The Bells were heard to ring joyfully afar off. As soon as we entred the *Church*, they began to sing *Te Deum Laudamus*; the *Musick* one verse, the *Organ* another. That ended, they having the most *Holy Sacrament* ready on one *Carriage*, our *Lady's Image* on another, with *Crosses*, and *Standards*: the *Procession* set forward toward *S. Ann's Hermitage* with great solemnity, and most decent order. We with our white *Clokes*, and *Veils* before our faces, went in the middle, near to the most holy *Sacrament*: and next unto us our *Discalced Friars*, who came in good number from the *Covent of our Lady of Succours*: the *Franciscan Fathers* also came in *Procession* (there being a *Covent* of them in the town) and with them a *Dominican Frier*, who was then here; for, though he were alone, it pleased me to see that *Habit* there.

It being a long Way, severall Altars were erected therein, at which sometimes they staid, singing certain elegant Compositions in praise of our *Order*: which caused great devotion in us, to see, how all extolled that great *God*, whom they carried along with them; and how for his sake, such account was made of seven poor *Discalced Women* of us, that vuent in company: although at that very time I vvas confounded exceedingly, to consider, that I vvent amongst them, vwho, had they treated me according to my merits, should have bandied all against me. I have made you, *Sisters*, this long Narration of the honour done to the *Habit* of the *B. Virgin*, that ye may praise our *Lord*, and beseech him, that he may be vwell served in this *Foundation*. For, I am more delighted, vwhen in sounding I suffer great persecutions, and troubles, and I more willingly recount them to you. True it is; that those *Sisters* that lived there before vve came, endur'd enough for about six Years: for at least five and a half, after they had entred this house of the glorious *S. Ann*, besides the extreme poverty, and pains, they took to get obdr. *Victuals*: for they vwould never ask Alms, lest those of the place might think, they retired thither to be maintained by them. I say nothing of their rigorons penances, in fasting much, eating little, lying hard, and living in a very strait House:

which in so strict Clauſure there, as they always kept, was trouble enough. But the greatest affliction they ſuffered (as they told me) was the extreme desire of receiving our Habit: this tormented them exceedingly day, and night, as conceiving, they ſhould never arrive thereto: whereupon their whole prayer was, the requeſting this favour of God with continual tears: and, either ſeeing, or hearing of any obſtacle, or difficulty, they grieved excessively, and increased their penances. Out of their gettings they paid the Meſſengers ſent to me; thus leſſening their Diet: and hereby alſo they shewed to ſuch, as were able to have relieved them, that they could ſufficiently maintain themſelves in their mean condition. I well perceived, after I converſed with them, and beheld their Sanctity, that their Prayers, and tears had prevailed, and obtained of our Lord the Order's admitting them: and I account it a much greater treasure, that there are ſuch perſons in our Monasteries, than the having large Revenues: and I hope, that both my iſatisfaction, and theirs, ſhall go on ſtill increaſing.

When we came into the Houſe, they were all at the Door within, every one appareled after their own fashion; for they were in the ſame attire wherewiſh they entred, having never taken the habit of Religious perſons, excepting ours ſtill: though that, they wore, was very modeſt; but herein might eaſily be gathered the little eſteem, they made of themſelves, by their being ſo ill-favouredly dressed, and almoſt diſfigured; which evidently diſcovered the great pe- naunce, they had done. They received us with many tears of joy; which, as plainly appeared, were not counterfeiſt. In this their joy likewiſe was ſeen their ſingular Vertue, Humility, and Obedience to the *Prioreſſ*; and to all the *Sisters*, that came to the *Foundation*, they shewed ſuch obſe- quiousneſs, that they ſpent themſelves in deſiring to pleaſure them in any thing. All their fear was, leſt they ſhould return back again, affrighted, poſſibly, with their extreme Poverty, and their little Cottage, they ſaw. None of them ever governed the reſt, but each with much humility la- boured, and wrought, what they could. Two, that were the auncientest, managed the neceſſary buſineſs; the reſt never ſpake with any. They ſlept very little, becauſe of getting their *Viciualls*, and not loſing their Prayers; wherein they ſpent many hours, and on Festivals the whole Day. They were directed theren by the Books of Father *Lewis of Gra- nada*, and Father *Peter of Alcantara*. They ſpent muſh of their time in reciting the *Divine Office*, with that ſmall ſkill they had in reading (for, only one could read well) and this not in the modern *Breviaries*; be- cause certain *Priests* had given them ſome, which ſerved no more for their

their own use, these being of the old Roman Edition, that was used before the Council of Trent : and, being unskilfull in reading, they were at it divers hours, and said, doubtless, many things irregularly, and made many mistakes through ignorance therein ; but God accepted their good intention, and pains : the best was, they said it in a place, where they could not be heard by people abroad. When Father Antonio de Jesu began to perceive it, and to converse with them, he made them say only our Lady's Office. They had an Oven in the house, wherein they baked their Bread ; and they did every thing with such concord, as if they had one to command them like a Superior. All which afforded me great occasion of praising God ; and the more I conversed with them, the more I was pleased in my being come. Methinks I would not for the many troubles, which I might have undergone, have neglected the comforting these Souls. My Companions, that staid there, told me, that for some days at first they found some reluctance in themselves [to live with them] but soon after, when they perceived, and discovered their singular Virtue, they rejoiced exceedingly to live with them, and loved them entirely. O how powerfull is holiness, and virtue ! it is very true, those [brought thither] were such, as would have feared no difficulties, or troubles, how great soever, but courageously have sustained them by our Lord's assistance ; for they desired to suffer much for his Service. And that Nun, that finds not in her self this desire, let her not in any wise account her self a true Discalceate ; since our desires should not tend to ease, but suffering, that we may in somthing imitate our Spouse. His Majesty vouchsafe to give us grace, so to do.

The Originall of this Hermitage of S. Ann was in this manner. There lived here a Priest born at Zamora, called Diego de Guadalasara, who had bin a Religious Man of our Order of our Lady of Carmel ; and he joyned to his Houle this Hermitage, having convenience there for hearing Mass said in it. Moved with devotion, as being a very virtuous, and retired Man, he went to Rome, and got a Bull with many Indulgences, and Pardons for this Church, or Hermitage. Being near his end, he appointed by Will, that this House, and all his Goods should go to the founding a Monastery of Nuns of our Lady of Carmel ; and, if this succeeded not, that a Chaplain should be procured, to say every week certain Masses there : but, intending, when ever the Monastery was built, there should be no further obligation of saying the forementioned Masses : thus it continued with a Chaplain only above twenty years, having a very small Rent ; for, when these women came thither, they had nothing but the mere empty House, the Chaplain living in another house of the Chappeltry

Chappeltry, that now will fall to us with the rest, thought it be very little; but so great is the Mercy of God, that he will not fail to be a *Protector* to the House of his glorious *Grandmother*: His *Divine Majesty* youshafte to be always served therein; and let creatures praise him for ever and ever to all eternity. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXXIII.

The Foundation of the Monastery of Palentia.

AT my return from the Foundation of *Villanova de la Xara*, my *Superior* commanded me to go to *Valladolid*, at the request of *Don Alvaro de Mendoza* *Bishop* of *Palentia*, who admitted the first *Monastery* of *S. Joseph* of *Avila*, and who hath always favoured us, and doth still, in every thing belonging to our *Order*; He having left the *Bishoprick* of *Avila*, and accepted that of *Palentia*, our *Lord* put it in his heart to desire the erecting here another *Monastery* of this holy *Order*. When I was come to *Valladolid*, I fell so extreme ill, that all thought, I would dy. I was so averse, and so far from thinking, I could do any good therein; that, although the *Priores* [*Maria de S. Baptista*] of our *Monastery* of *Valladolid*, much desiring this *Foundation*, exceedingly importuned me thereto, I could not assent, nor found I any ground for it; because the *Monastery* was to be founded in *Poverty*; and, on the other side, I was told, the Town was very poor, and would not be able to maintain the *Nuns*. I was about a year deliberating concerning the erecting this *Foundation*, together with that of *Burgos*; and at first I was not so unwilling thereto; but then I found out many inconveniences, though I went on purpose to *Valladolid* for nothing else. I know not, whether it were the extremity of the disease, and weakness, that I had; or the devil, who laboured to hinder the great good, that was afterward done there. The truth is, I am astonished, and extreamly afflicted (whereof many times I complain to our *Lord*) to see, how the poor soule shares in the body's infirmity, which, it seems, must perforce follow, and conform to its Laws, and conditions, thereafter as it imposeth necessities, and restraints. One of the sorest troubles, and miseries of humane life methinks, is this, the want of a generous Courage to master the Body; for, though the being sick, and enduring grievous pains be a trouble, yet, if the soule remain watchfull over it self, it makes no account thereof; because it serves her for a Motive to praise *God*, and she considers, that it comes from his

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Divine hand. But, for the one part of us to remain in suffering ; and the other, for this , to cease operating, is a terrible thing ; especially, if it be a Soule , that hath strong, and ardent Desires of not resting, either inferiorly , or exteriorly , but of employing her self wholly in the service of her most great, and amiable God. She hath here no other remedy, but patience, the acknowledging her great misery, & resigning her self absolutely to Gods will , to do with her what he pleaseth , and as he will . Thus I was then , though on the mending hand ; but my weaknes was so great , that I had even lost the confidence , which Almighty God was wont to give me for the beginning these Foundations . All was rendred impossible: and , if I had then light on some person , that had encouraged me , it might have benefited me much ; but the misery was ; some increased my fears ; and others (though suggesting some hopes) sufficed not to cure my Pusillanimity .

There happened to come hither Father Doctor Ripalda of the Society of Jesus , a very learned man , and a great servant of God , and who had a long time bin my Confessor . I gave him an account how I was , and that I took him in the room of God , requesting him to declare his opinion, being resolved to follow his Counsel . He began much to encourage me , and told me this Cowardize proceeded from Old age : but I saw plainly , that that was not it ; for I am now older , and yet not so affected ; he likewise must needs know it ; but said so to argue it with me , and our brave me , because I thought [what ever it came from] it came not from God .

The designe of this Foundation of Palentia went on alike with that of Burgos ; I had nothing , either toward the one ; or the other : but this hindred me not ; for I use to begin so . That of Palentia about which I moved him , Father Ripalda bad me in no wise omit : the same a little before had Father Baltasar Alvarez , Provincial of the Society of Jesus , said to me in Toledo ; but then I was well . This was enough to have enabled me to resolved , and , though in effect it moved me greatly , yet I was not fully resolved ; for the devil , or (as I said) my disease held me still fast , though I much rather inclined to accept it . The Prioress of Kulladolid helped , all she could , hastening me forward , because she greatly desired a Foundation at Palentia ; but , when she saw me so coole , she grew alike timorous . Now let the true Heat come , and warme me ; since neither Men of the World , nor the servants of God suffice : whereby may be gathered , that it is not I many times , that act at all in these Foundations , but He , who is able to do every thing .

One Morning , after I had communicated , being in these doubts , and irrefo-

irresolutions about erecting any Foundation, I besought our *Lord* to enlighten me, both in this, and every thing else, precisely to do his will, for, my tepidity was not such, that it could ever in the least abate of this desire. Our *Lord*, as it were chiding, said to me: *What are you afraid of? when was I at any time wanting to you? I am the same now, that I was: neglect not the erecting these two Foundations.* O great, and powerfull *God*! how do your Words differ from Mens! I became herewith so resolute, and valiant that all the world could not prevale, by whatsoeuer opposition to have hindred me from attempting it. I began presently to negociate the busines; our *Lord* also began to afford me Means. I admitted two for *Nuns*, to purchase a House with their Portions; and, though they told me, *Palentia* was a poor Town, and that it was impossible to live there without liberall alms, I no more regarded it, than if they had not told me so; for, to found a *Monastery* with Rents, I already saw, was not then feasible: and, since *God* bad it be made, his *Majesty* would take care of it: so, though I were not quite well, but as yet recovering, I resolved to go, notwithstanding the season was cold, & sharp; for I went from *Valladolid* on *S.S. Innocent's* day, the year above-mentioned. And because a *Gentleman* of that place, who went to live elswere, had left us a house of his till *S. Johns* following, I writ to a *Canon* of that City (for, although I knew him not, yet I was told by a friend of his, that he was a Servant of *God*; and so I took it for granted, that by his means our *Lord* would help us much; as in other Foundations hath bin seen, that in every Quarter he selects some still to assist us; his *Majesty* well discerning the little I my self am able to do.) I writ (I lay) to this *Canon*, intreating him, with all secrecy possible, to rid the house of him, that then lived in it, without telling him, what use it was for; because, though some eminent Persons had shewn a great liking thereof, & the *Bishop* inclined much to it, yet, methought, it was safer, to conceal it. The *Canon Reinofo* (for, that was his Name, I writ to) did so punctually; not only clearing the house, but providing us Beds, with many conveniences, and accommodations very compleatly; whereof we had need enough; for it was extreme cold, and the day before was exceeding tedious with a Mist also so thick, that we could scarce see one another. It is true, that we rested little till we had fitted a place for saying *Mass* the next day, before any one knew that we were come; for, this I have found the best expedient in these Foundations: because, if we begin once to enter into opinions, and discourses, the devill endeavours to obstruct every thing; and, though he cannot have his will in a matter, yet he disturbs it. And so it was brought about, that betimes in the morning,

about Sun-rise , a Priest that came with us , called *Porras* , a great Servant of God , said *Mas* : and another , one much affected to the *Nuns* of *Valladolid* , named *Augustine de Victoria* , who lent me Money to furnish the House , and did me many courtesies on the way .

There came with me five *Nuns* , and a Lay-Sister , [*Agnes de Jesu* ; *Catharina de Spiritu Santo* ; *Maria de S. Bernardo* ; *Joanna de S. Francisco* ; and *Isabella de Jesu* , *Superioresse*] who for a long time hath bin my Associate , so great a Servant of God , and so discreet , that she can affit me more than the rest , that are of the *Quire* . We slept little this night , though we were weary with our tedious Journy , by reason of the rains that fell . I was much pleased , that it was founded on that Day , wherein , according to our *Breviary* , the Office of the holy King *David* is said , being particularly devoted to this *Saint* . Presently that Morning I gave the *Bishop* notice hereof , who never imagined , we were to come that day . He immediatly came to visit us in great charity , which he hath always expressed toward us . He said , he would give us what Bread , we needed , and commanded his Officer to furnish us with divers things . The obligation is so great , he hath laid on our *Order* , that whoever of us shall read these *Foundations* , may understand , he is bound to recommend him , whether living , or dead , to our *Lord* ; and this in charity I desire him . The joy that all the people manifested was so great , and universal , that it was very remarkable ; for there was not one person , that disliked the busyness . The knowing that the *Bishop* had desired this *Foundation* conduced much thereto , he being exceedingly beloved there ; but the people are generally of a better disposition , and generosity , than I had seen : so that I was every day better pleased with my having founded there .

The House wherein we were being none of ours , presently we began to consult of buying another ; for , although that , we lived in , was also to be sold , we had no mind to it , because it stood in an ill place : and , with the supply , which I had of the *Nuns* , that were to be admitted , there seemed to be some ground to speak about it : for , though it were little , it was enough there . But , if God had not raised us up good friends , (as he did) all had bin nothing : for , the good *Canon Reinoso* drew in another intimate friend of his , called *Canon Salinas* , one of great charity , and judgment : and they both took care thereof , as though it had bin for themselves ; and , I think , more ; as they did also ever after for this *Monastery* . There is in that City a *Church* of great esteem , in the manner of a *Hermitage* , called our *Lady de la Strada* ; whither for devotion resort huge numbers of that Town , and of the Country adjoining . The

Bishop

Bishop, and all conceived, we might be well there; for, though the Church had no house, yet there were two hard by, which, being bought, were, together with the Church, enough for us. This Church was in the gift of the Chapter, and a Confraternity: to the business was attempted. The Chapter, soon consented to us; but we had difficulty enough with the Confrriers: at length they also yielded; for, (as I said) the Inhabitants of that town are as exceeding pious, and courteous, as any, I ever saw in my life.

When the Owners of the houses saw we liked them, they began to hold them high, and justly: I would needs go see them, and both I, and those likewise that came with us so disliked them, that I would by no means middle with them. It appeared evidently afterward, that the devil laboured exceedingly for his part, to hinder us: for, our going thither displeased him. The two Canons, who managed the business, thought it too far from the Cathedral Church(as it is;) but it stands in the most populous place of the City. At last we resolved, that that house was not convenient for us, and that another should be sought out. Hereupon those two Gentlemen the Canons with such care, and diligence began to enquire, omitting nothing, which they judged likely, that I exceedingly praised our Lord for it. One they liked, which belonged to one Tamayo; it had severall things convenient, and that fitted our turn well, and stood near the house of an eminent Gentleman, called *Suero de Vega*, who favoured us much, and greatly desired our coming thither, as likewise many in that quarter. This house sufficed not; but with it they gave us another, though such a one, as we could not well accommodate to the other. In conclusion, they reported so vwell of it, that I vvas vwillng, it should be taken; but those Gentlemen vwould not, unless I first savv it. I vvas so averse from going forth, and being amongst much people, that I told them, I relied upon them; but there vvas no remedy. At length I vvent thither, and likevile to the houses of our *Lady de la Strada*; though vwith no intention to take them; but, to shew the ovner of this, that vve could be vwithout his, and that therefore he shoule not raise its price. Those of our *Lady's* looked so very ill again, both to Me, and my Companions, that vvent vwith me, that vve are still afforsled, howv they could seem so bad to us: and thus disgusted vve returned to that others, firmly resolved to take it, and meddle vwith none else: and, though vve met vwith many difficulties, yet vve mastered them, notwithstanding they could very hardly be remedied: for, to the making the Church, vwhich also could not be large, must be quite taken all that, vwhich vwas convenient for our dyvelling in. It is a strange thing for one to go refo-

lately about a thing. The truth is, God permitted this, that I might trust little to my self. In fine therefore (as I said) vve determined to take this other house, paying the rate that vvas demanded, vwhich vvas high enough; and to vwrite to the Landlord, vwho vwas not then in the City, but abroad in a place near. It seems impertinent, for me to insist thus on this subject of buying a House; but my scope is, to let you see, how much the devil laboured, to hinder our going to live in that of our *Lady's*: vwhich, every time I remember, I tremble at.

The tvwo *Canons* (as I laid) being resolved to take no other house, the next day, hearing *Mass*, I began to be solicitous, and much perplexed in my thoughts, vwhether I did vwell to take this House, and vwith such anxiety, as scarce let me rest, or attend the vwhole *Mass*. I drevv near to receive the *B. Sacrament*, and, in taking it, I heard these vwords: *That of our Lady fits thee*: and this after such a manner, that it made me to resolve absolutely, not to take that, I intended, but those at our *Lady's*. Methought, it vvas hard, to break off a businels so far gone; and vwhich the *Canons* vwith so much solicitude had a greed upon. Our *Lord* ansvered me: *They know not, how much I am here offended; and this will be a great cure of it.* A doubt arose in my mind, vwhether that speech vvere from *God*, or some delusion; though, by the effects, it produced in me; I knew very plainly, and certainly, that it was the *Spirit of God*. And presently our *Lord* said: *It is I.* Hereupon I remained very quiet; and the former cloud, and trouble, that oppressed me, scattered: though I was on the other side much ashamed, as not knowing how to recede from what was done, and from the much, that I had said in the matter of this house; especially that I had so disparaged to my *Sisters* these other houses of our *Lady*, telling them, I would not for all the World, we had gone to live there, before we saw them; though for these I much cared not; for, I knew well, they would judge favourably of what ever I did: but I was troubled for those, who so much desired the other house. I conceived, they would censure me as fickle, and self-willed, because I changed so quickly: a thing, I greatly abhor. But all these thoughts were notable to deterr, or hinder me, little or much, from going to the houses at our *Lady's*; nay, now I remembred no more their being inconvenient: for, in comparison of the desire the *Nuns* had, of remedying one only venial Sin, they accounted all the rest nothing; and I believe, every one of them, that had known what I then knew, would have bin of my mind. It seemed good to me to make use of this remedy.

I confessed my self to *Canon Reingo*, who was one of the two, that assisted me

me; though I gave him no accoung of this kind of spirituall things, because no opportunity had presented it selfe to me, to necessitate me to it; &, being wont, in founding these *Monasteries*, to do ever what my *Confessor* advised me, to proceed more securely, I determined to tell him this matter under strict secrecy, and to hear, what he said to me; though I did not find my self very resolute to desist from doing that, I had understood in prayer, without giving my self much displeasure therein: but in conclusion I would have done it; because I trusted in our *Lord*, that he wold do, what at other times I saw, namely, dispose, or incline the *Confessor* (though of another opinion himself) to do, and direct that, whch he pleased. I began first to tell him, that many times our *Lord* used to instruct me in these matters, and that hitherto severall things had appeared, by which I plainly perceived, it was his Spirit: and so I related to him this, that had passed; but added, that I wold do what he thought fit, though I should feele some reluctance in it. He is (though young) very discreet, pious, and judicious in any occurrent: and, notwithstanding he saw, I shd be blamed herein, yet wold he not resolve, the doing of that shd be forborn, which I had understood in prayer. I told him, we wold expect the Messenger, who was sent to the Master of the house, for an Answer: which he liked well. I trusted in *God*, that he vwould help us, as he did: for, having granted to the Landlord aforesaid vwhat he desired, and asked, he nowv demanded three hundred Crovns more; vwhich seemed very ridiculous; for, he vvas already overpaid. Hereby vve perceived, it vvas Gods doing, that the Bargain might be broken: for, the sale vvas advantageous for the Landlord; and the demanding more aftervvard, than vwas agreed on had no colour, nor became it us to give it. This helped our business much, that vve said vve shd never finishe a Bargain vvith him; but yet not altogether: for it vwas manifest, that for three hundred Crovns vve vwould not have lost a house that seemed fit for a *Monastery*. I wished my *Confessor*, not to trouble himself, as touching my reputation, or credit, since he vwas likevvise of the same opinion vvith me; but to tell his Companion, that I vwas resolved, they shd buy those of our *Lady's* at any rate, dear, or cheap. He is of a very sharp understanding; and, though nothing of vwhat I had heard in prayer had bin told him, I believe, seeing so sudden a change, he vwould have imagined it, whereupon he solicited me no further, nor pressed that agreement.

We have all since seen the great error, vve committed in that Bargain; for, vve are nowv astonished at the great conveniences, and advantages of these other, besides the principall, nattely, the singular benefit, with

which is here apparently manifest in serving our *Lord*, and his *Glorious Mother*; and in cutting off divers occasions of offending *God*. For there were frequent *Night-Vigils* kept there, and (it being only an *Herrimage*) many things might there be committed, the taking away whereof displeased the devil: but We on the other side were glad, that in any thing we were able to serve our dear *Lady*, and *Patron*: and it was ill done to deserre it; for we were not to have sought, or looked any further. It is evident, the devill here blinded us in many things; for there are severall conveniences, not to be found in other places: and the content of all the people, who much desired it, is extraordinary; yea even those, who wished our going somwhither else, liked it extreme well. Eternally blessed be our *Lord*, who herein gave Me light; as I perceive, he always doth, when ever I happen to do any thing well: for I more and more admire the little skill, I have in all matters: nor take it as spoken out of Humility, in regard I see it every day, and have experience of it; for, it seems, his *Majesty's* pleasure is, that I, and all should learn, and understand, that it is he alone, who doth these works; and that (as once by clay he restored sight to the Blind) so is he pleased to bestow light, and gracie, on a thing so blind as I am, to produce an effect not so. Questionles in this affair (as I have said) intervened discoveries of strange blindnes; which, every time I think thereon, move me to praise, & thank our *Lord* anew for it: yet am I not good even at this; nor know I, how he shold endure me. His infinite Mercy be blessed. Amen.

So presently these holy friends of the *Virgin* hastened to Bargain for the Houses; and me-thought, they had them very cheap; they took much pains in it, &c. for, in each of these Foundations, *God* is pleased to give them, who assit us, matter of Merit; and I am she, that do nothing at all, as I have somtimes said, and wold never give over saying, because it is true. Now, in furnishing the House, and paying so much mony for it (for I had none) their trouble; and pains was very great, besides their being bound for it. For, in other places, before I could get security (for a less summ) I was fore pinched; and people have reaon; for, if they trusted not our *Lord*, why should they Me, having not one farthering: but his *Majesty* hath dont me the favour, that whoever hath passed their Word for me, never lost any thing thereby, nor failed of being very well rewarded for his pains; which I take for a signall favour.

The Owners of the houses being not content with the two *Canons* for security, the said *Canons* went to look the *Vicar*, whose name was *Prudentius* (I know not whether I remember it right; thus they now tell me it; for, in regard they called him the *Vicar*, I then knew not his Name)

one so very charitable to us, that we art much obliged to him. Meeting one another accidentally the *Vicar* asked them, whether they went? They answered; to get him, to signe that *Bond*. At which he laughed, saying Do ye speak on this fashion to me, to engage for such a Summe? and straight without alighting from his Mule signed it: a thing much to be noted in our times. I am unwilling to give over extolling highly the great charity, I found in *Palentia*, both in particular, and generall. The truth is, it seemed to me to resemble the state of the *Primitive Church*, at least not usuall in these Ages of the world; To see, that we had no revenue; nay, that they were to provide us *Victuals*; and yet, not only not to withdraw themselves; but, to account the being able to do it, a speciall favour done them by *God*: and they said true, If it be looked on with a clear eye, and divine light; for, were it only the having one *Church* more, wherein the *Blessed Sacrament* is kept, it is a high favour. Be He for ever Blessed. Amen.

It is sufficiently manifest, that our *Lord* was pleased, here to have a *Monastery*, and that formerly many extravagances and disorders were committed, which were now cutt off. For, in regard divers persons kept *Vigils* there, and the *Hermitage* was solitary, all went not thither for Devotion; but it is otherwise now, and those inconveniences are remedied. The Image of the *Blessed Virgin* our *Lady* was ill placed; and used with great indecency; but the *Bishop* *Don Alvarez de Mendoza* hath put it by it self in a *Chappel*, which he hath built for it; and many things continually are done for the honour, and renown of this Glorious *Virgin*: whose *Blessed Son* be for ever praised. Amen.

Now, the *Monastery* being quite finished against the time that the *Nuns* were to remove thither, the *Bishop* would have them go in great solemnity one day within the *Oitavas* of the most *Holy Sacrament*, coming over himself on purpose from *Valladolid*. The *Chapter*, the severall *Orders*, the *Clergy*, and well nigh the whole *City* were assembled with excellent *Musick*: and we all went in *Procession* from the House where we lived, with our White clokes, and *Veils* over our faces to a *Parish* that was nigh the House; where we met the forementioned *Image*, which was come for us; and we reconveyed it thence, taking likewise the most *Holy Sacrament*, which was set up in our *Church* with great solemnity, joy, and devotion of all: and, in regard more *Nuns* were come for the *Foundation* of *Soria*, we all went in *Procession* with *Candles* in our hands. I believe, our *Lord* was exceedingly praised that day by the People of that place. He so grant, that the same be always done by all his Creatures. Amen.

Ff

Whilst

Whilst I was at *Palencia*, it pleased God, that a Division was made betwixt the *Discalced*, and *Calced* Fathers; each chusing a Provincial of their owne, which was one of the joyfulllest Events, that we could expect, or desire in this Life: knowing, that it was of great concernment to the service of our *Lord*, and the peace, and quiet of our *Order*. At the instance of our *Catholick King*, *Don Philip the Second*, a very large *Breve*, and favourable for that purpose was obtained from the *Pope*; and his *Catholick Majesty* aided, and countenanced us much in the execution thereof, as he had begun. A Chapter was held in *Alcala* by command of the very Reverend Father *John de las Cuevas*, then Prior of *S. Ginesius* in *Talavera*, of the *Order of S. Dominic*, who was appointed President by the *Pope*, and the *Breve* committed to him, being nominated by his *Catholick Majesty*, a person very holy, and discreet; as such a busyness required. The *King* bore their charges; and, by his order, the *Discalced* were much favoured by the whole *University*. It was held in a *Callege*; we had there, called *S. Cyril of the Discalced*, with great peace, and concord. *Father Hieronymus Gratianus de Matre Dei* was chosen *Provincial*. What passed in this Chapter these Fathers will declare; therefore I need not treat thereof. I desired to intimate thus much, because, whilst I negotiated this *Foundation*, our *Lord* was pleased to finish a busyness so much tending to the glory, and honour of his Glorious *Mother*; since she is the *Lady*, and *Patron* of our *Order*, as being hers. It caused in me (as I said) one of the greatest joys, I was capable of in this life, it being above 25. Years, since I desired it, having seen the many, and great persecutions, troubles, and afflictions, the *Discalced Fathers* have suffered, which, to repeat, would be too long: our *Lord* only thoroughly understands it. He that fully knows not the troubles sustained, cannot, from seeing this busyness effected, conceive the joy of my heart, and the enflamed desire, I had, that all the World should praise our *Lord*, and that we should recommend to his *Divine Majesty* our holy *King Don Philip*, by whose means he had brought this *Order of Discalced* to so good an Issue: for, the devill had already so bestirred him, that little wanted of all falling to the ground; and, questionless, the busyness had utterly bin defeated, had not the *King interposed*.

At present we are all in peace *Calcretes*, and *Discalcretes*; having none to disturbe us in the service of our *Lord*. Wherefore, Brethren, and Sisters, let us by our prayers endeavour to continue it, so, and serve with alacrity his *Divine Majesty*. Let the living, who are eye-witnesses, consider well the favours, he hath done us; and, from what troubles, and molestations, he hath freed us. And those that shall come after, when

when they find all smooth , and fitted to their hand , let them not , for the love of our Lord , suffer any thing of such perfection to decay ; let it not be said by them , what is of certain Orders , that Men command their Beginnings ; and that this is our beginning ; and let them endeavour to be always beginning , and proceed from Good to Better . Let them consider , how , by means of small things , the devill is continually boaring , and making holes for great ones afterward to enter . Never let them say , There is no hurt in this ; or , that these are extremes , &c . for , all imports much . O my Daughters , in every thing Much is lost , where Nothing is advanced . For the love of our Lord , I beseech you , remember , how soon all will end ; and the favour , our Lord hath done us , in calling us to this holy Order ; and the great punishment , he shall suffer , who shall begin any Relaxation : but let them still fix their eyes on those holy Prophets , from whom we are descended : for , we have store of Saints in heaven , who have worne this Habit . Let us take up that holy Presumption , of desiring to be our selves like them : the Fight , my Sisters , lasts but a while ; but the reward of the Victory endures for ever . Let us quit these things , which have no being in themselves , and lay hold on those , that bring us to that end , which hath no end ; the more to love , and serve Him , being hereafter to live with him Eternally . Amen .

C H A P . XXXIV .

The Foundation of the Monastery of Soria .

B eing at Palentia about the forementioned Foundation , a Letter was brought me from Doctor Velasquez , Bishop of Osma , with whom I had conferred , and given an account of my Soule , by reason of some fears , that then disquieted me , he being at that time Canon , and Professor , in the great Church of Toledo : and because I knevv he vvas a man very learned , and a great Servant of God , I earnestly requested him to take care of my Soul ; and confess me . He , though extreme busy (upon my intreating him for the love God , and seeing my need) did it so vvillingly , that I vvas amazed ; and he Confessed me , and heard me all the time , I lived in Toledo , which vvas very long . I gave him an account of my Soul vwith all simplicity , as I alvways use ; he did me exceeding much good ; for , from that time I began to have some quiet from my former fears . It is true ; he had some other business , not to be

mentioned here. In effect he benefitted me exceeding much : for, he confirmed me from texts of Holy Scripture ; a thing which much pleaseth me, and, makes to my purpose ; when I am certified by one that hath a good Understanding, joined with a holy, and virtuous Life. This Letter he writ me from *Soria*, where he then was ; acquainting me, that a *Genitewoman*, his Penitent, had communicated to him her desire of erecting a *Monastery for Nuns* ; and, because he liked the designe, he perswaded her to found it of our *Order* : that he had told her, he would procure Me to go thither to found it ; therefore I must not faile, lest I made him a Liar. And, if I thought good to admitt it, I should let him know, because he would send to fetch Me. I was exceeding glad ; because, besides its being a good *Foundation*, I had a great desire to communicate to him Some things concerning my Soul, and to see him ; for, by reason of the extraordinary profit, and advantage, I sometimes received, and gained by him, I bare him a singular affection. The Name of this *Lady Founder* was *Donna Beatrice de Viamonte*, and *Navarra*, descended of the Kings of *Navarr*, Daughter of *Don Francis de Viamonte*, of an Illustrious, and very Noble House. She had bin married some years, but had no Children ; She was very rich, and for soune time before had determined to erect a *Monastery of Nuns*. When she had consulted the *Bishop* who informed her of this *Order* of our *Lady of Discalced Women*, it liked her so well, that afterward she did nothing but urge him to get it dispatched. She is one of an affable disposition, generous, a lover of Penance, in brief a great Servant of God. She had a fair House in *Soria*, strong, & well situated ; which, she said, she would give us with all that was necessaries for *Founding* : this she actually bestowed with five hundred Crowns yearly Rent, after the rate of five in the hundred. The *Bishop* offered to give a very fair *Church*, bailt all in Arches, which belonged to a *Parish* hard by the Houle, and with a Little *Gallery*, that was added, served us well ; and he did well to bestow it on us, because the Parish was poor ; and, there being many *Churches*, he easily translated it, and annexed it to another *Church*. Of all this he gave me notice in his letter, and I communicated it to *Father Provincial*, who was then here : and both he, and all his friends, thought fit, that I should answer it expressly, that they should come & fetch me, for the *Foundation* of *Palencia* was already finilhed, & I was very glad thereof, for the forementioned reasons. I presently caused the *Nuns* to come, whom I was to take thither with me, which were Seven (for, the *Lady* desired they shold have bin rather more, than fewer) one *Lay-Sister* my Companion, and I. A Servant of the *Bishop's*, one very usefull, and diligent, came for us : and, because

cause I had writ to him, that two *Diseas'd Fathers* would come with Me, I took Father Fr. Nicolas de Jesu Maria for one, a Genoese, of the *Dorian* family, a very prudent, and discreet person. He took the Habit being above forty years of age, as I think: at least now he is so, and he took it not long since; but hath advanced so far in this short space, as it sufficiently appears, our Lord chose him to assist our *Order* in these troubles; for, he hath in these our afflictions, and persecutions taken excessive pains; whereas others, who might have bin serviceable, were either banished, or emprisoned: of him they made no account, being in no Office, because it was but lately since he came into the *Order*, as I said: and God did it, that I might have such an Assistant. He is so understanding a Man, and so discreet, that he lived at Madrid in a *Covent* of the *Relaxed Fathers*, as if upon other employment, with such dexterity, and closenes, that they never discovered, that he managed our busines: and so let him alone. We writ often to each other, whilst I was at S. Joseph of Avila's Monastery, and negotiated what seemed fitting, he receiving a great consolation therein. Hence may be gathered the necessity, the *Order* was in, since, for want of a better (as they say) I was so much set by. All this time I had experience of his perfection, and prudence; so that he is one whom I love much in our *Lord*, and esteem a great honour to the *Order*.

So, He, and a lay-Companion of his went along with us. I suffered little inconvenience in this journey, because he, whom the *Bishop* sent treated us very liberally, and freely; and good lodging was provided us; for, entring the *Diocese* of Osma, whereever we came, I perceived such affection toward the *Bishop*, that, upon mentioning, that it was his mind, they caressed us very much, and afforded us good accommodation. The Weather was good, the journeys not great, and so the trouble in travelling was little; but the content much: for, hearing how well they spake of the sanctity of the *Bishop*, I rejoiced extreamly. We reached Burgos the Wednesday before the *Oitave* of the *B. Sacrament*: the next day being Thursday, and the *Oitave*, we communicated there, and stayed Supper also; for, we could not get that Evening to *Soria*; and that Night we spent in a *Church*, finding no other lodging, and this well pleasing us. At Day-break we heard *Mass* there, and got to *Soria* about five in the Evening; and, going by the holy *Bishop's* House, who was there in a Window, he gave us his *Blessing*, which not a little cheered me. He being both a *Prelate*, and a *Saint*.

The *Lady* our *Foundress* stood expecting us at the Gate of her House, where the *Monastery* vvas to be. We saw no way to get in, there vwas

so much people, who tarried there-to see us; though it was no new thing; for, wherever we went (the World being so addicted to novelty) there was such flocking, that had not we worn Veils before our faces, it would have bin a great trouble to us, but thus it was tolerable. The *Lady* had provided a very faire large Hall to serve us for a *Church*, and for saying *Mass* in, till a Gallery were made to pass to that which the *Bishop* gave us. So, the next day, being the *Feast* of our holy Prophet *Eliseus*, the first *Mass* was said, and possession taken. The *Lady* had furnished the House abundantly with all things necessary, and left us an Appartement, where we lived retired till the Gallery was finisched, which lasted to the *Transfiguration*: on which day, in the *Church* given us by the *Bishop*, was said the first *Mass* with great solemnity, and much concourse of people. A *Father* of the Society preached, the *Bishop* being gone to *Burgos*; for, he let not a day, nor hour pass, without taking pains, though not well, having lost the sight of one Eye; which was the only affliction, I had there, being extream sorry, that a sight so usefull, and beneficiall in the service of our *Lord*, should be lost; whose judgments certainly are secret; affording hereby his Servant more occasion of meriting (for, he laboured not less than formerly) and making triall, how he would conform to his Will. He told me, it troubled him no more, than if it had not happened; and that somtimes he thought, it would not grieve him, though he lost the sight of the Other; for, so he should live in an *Hermitage*, and serve *God* without any further obligation. This had ever bin his proper inclination, before he was *Bishop*, and so he told me somtimes; yea that he had wel-nigh resolved to quit all, and go to orie. I could not endure that, conceiving him exceeding usefull to the *Church* of *God*; and therefore wished him, what he now is: although that day, the *Bishoprick* was bestowed on him, (which he presently sent me word of) I was in a very great disorder, imagining, I saw him with a huge *Load*, so that I could not rest, nor be at ease: whereupon I went into the *Quire* to recommend him to our *Lord*; and his *Majesty* quieted me straight, telling me, it would be greatly for his Service; as is now sufficiently evident. Notwithstanding the pain, he hath in his Eye, besides others very troublesome, and the constant labour, he useth, four days in the Week he fasts, and performs severall other Penances; his Table is very mean, and his Diet not at all Dainty. When he visites, he goes on foot; which his Servants cannot endure, and complaine of to me: and they are certainly very vertuous; and devout, else they stay not in his house. He seldome trusts important matters to pass through the hands of his *Officiers* (nor of others, I suppose) but would have them pass

as through his owne For two years in the entring on his Bishoprick, he endur'd here the most violent Persecutions in the world by false accusation, which astonished me : for, in matter of doing justice, he is exceeding upright, and exact. By degrees they ceased ; for, though his Enemies went to the Court, where they thought most to prejudice him, yet, his extraordinary Vertue already appearing throughout his whole Diocese, they could do little ; and he hath suffered with so great perfection, that he hath shamed his adversaries ; doing good to those, who did him harm. Notwithstanding his many employments, he neglects not to steal time for Prayer. Methinks I am almost drunk with the commendations of this holy Man, and I have said little ; but this I have done, to discover, who began the founding the *Monastery* of the most *Holy Trinity* in *Soria* ; and that those to come may comfort themselves, that they are to live there : and none of these things be lost. For I well know, that the present are not ignorant of it. Although he gave not the revenue, yet he gave the *Church* ; & it was he (as I said) who perswaded that *Lady* to erect the *Monastery* ; & he is a very good Christian, a man of great Vertue & much Penance.

Now, after that our passage to the *Church* was finished, and all things necessary for Clauſure fitted, it was requisite I should return to the *Monastery* of *S. Joseph* at *Avila* ; & so I presently departed in very hot weather, and way extreme bad for travelling with Waggoners. One beneficed in *Palentia*, called *Ribera*, returned with Me, who had assisted me exceedingly in making the Gallery to the *Church*, and in all : for, the Father Fr. *Nicolas de Jesu Maria* went away soon after the Writings for the Foundation were drawn, for there was great need of him in another place. This *Ribera* had some busines at *Soria* ; and, upon this occasion, vvh'en vve went thither, vwould travell vwith us. From thence forvvard God gave him such a mind to assist us, that he ought to be num-bred amongst the Benefactors of the *Order*, and earnestly recommended to his *Majesty*. I vwould take no body vwith me, but him, and my vvonted Companion ; for, her diligence sufficeth me ; and I am best in Journeis, vvh'en I travell vwith least noise, and fevvest : But herein I paid for the pleasure, and conveniences, I had in travelling to *Soria* ; because, though he, that went vwith us, knew the vway to *Se-govia*, yet he knew not the Coach-vway ; so that the Waggoner led us through places, vwhere vve vvere fain to alight many times, and vwalk on foot, and carry the Coach by main strength, as it vvere, through certain craggy, and steep Prećipices. If vve took a Guide, he directed us as far as he knew the vway ; and, vvh'en vve came into a little bad vway, he left us, telling us, he had busines. Before vve could get to any Inne
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(going as it were groping our way) we were scorched extremely, and often in hazard of the Waggon's overturning : I was troubled for his sake that went with us ; because, though we were told, we went right, yet we were forced to return back by reason of the difficult passage, through those ill ways, we met with ; but his vertue was so solid, that he seemed to me not at all displeased, or altered, at which I much wondred, and praised our *Lord* ; for, where Vertue is deep-rooted, occasions work little upon them. Blessed be our *Lord*, who was pleased to free us out of that way.

We came to *S. Josephs* in *Segovia* the Vigil of *S. Bartholomew* ; where our *Nuns* were troubled at my long tarrying (though, the way proving so ill, it was much, to get thither then). There they caredss us much ; for, God never sends me a Cross, which he rewards not presently with some Delight. I rested above Eight days : and, because this Foundation was finished without trouble. I make light of this suffering, esteeming it nothing. I parted from *Soria* with much satisfaction, because it seems to me a place, where, I trust in the mercy of God, he will be served by those that live there, as is plainly seen already. Blessed, and praised be He for ever. Amen.

C H A P. XXXV.

Of the Foundation of the Monastery in Burgos.

Above Six Years ago some persons of the Society of Jesus, both learned, and spirituall, told me, it would be a considerable service to our *Lord*, that a Monastery of this our holy Order were founded in *Burgos*, producing certain reasons, greatly moving me to desire it. By reason of the many troubles of the Order, and other Foundations, there was no opportunity then of effecting it. In 1580. I being at *Valladolid*, the *Archbishop* of *Burgos* passed by, that *Archbishoprick* being then given him, who was formerly of the *Canaries*, and he went to reside there. I intreated the *Bishop* of *Palentia* *Don Alvarez de Mendoza* (of whom I have spoken sufficiently before, how much he favours our Order being the first that admitted the Monastery of *S. Joseph* at *Avila*, where he was then *Bishop* : and ever since hath shewn us great kindness, undertaking the concernments of our Order, as his own; those especially, which I recommend to him;) I intreated him, I say, to desire of the *Archbishop*

a Licence for founding in *Burgos*: he told me he would very willingly: for, conceiving that our *Lord* is, greatly served in these *Houses*, he took much pleasure, when any one is erected. The *Archbishop* would not enter into *Valladolid*, but lodged in *S. Hieroms Monastery*, where the *Bishop* of *Palentia* honourably entertained him, & went to Dine with him, and to give him a Girdle, or perform, I know not what, Ceremony, which belongs to the *Bishop*. There he desired leave to found a *Monastery*: he answered, with all his heart; for that, being *Bishop* of the *Canaries*, he also had a great mind, and much desired to have one of these *Monasteries*, knowing how greatly *Almighty God* is served therein. He was born in a place, where was a *Monastery* of ours; and knew Me well: whereupon the *Bishop* told me, I need not stop for a licence, because the *Archbishop* greatly approved it. And, whereas the *Council* expresseth not, its being delivered in writing, but only that such thing be done with his consent, this might be taken for granted.

In the foregoing *Foundation* of *Palentia* I mentioned the great reluctance, and averseness, I had to found at that time, being so extreme ill, that all thought, I would dy; and I was not yet quite recovered; though that is wont little to discourage me, when I see any thing tending to the service of *God*: and therfore I cannot understand the cause of that backwardness, and aversion, which I then had. For, if it were the small likelihood thereof, I had less in former *Foundations*: I conceive, it was the devill; since I have seen that which followed; for, so it hath usually fallen out. And, because in what ever *Foundation* still there is to be some trouble, our *Lord* (knowing me so miserable a Creature) always helpeth me either by words, or works; I have thought; that, as in some *Foundations*, where I had no troubles, his *Majesty* intimated nothing thereof to me; so it was in this; that he, knowing what I was to suffer, began at the first to encourage me: He be blessed for all. In the *Foundation* of *Palentia*, which was negotiated together with this, I hinted, how our *Lord* reprehending me asked: *What fear you? When did I ever fail you? I am the same; neglect not the erecting these two Foundations.* Which words, how much they animated me, because I have there mentioned, 'I shall not need here to repeat; for, presently all sloth left me. Whereby it is evident, that neither sickness, nor old age caused it, and so I began to negotiate the founding both those *Monasteries*, as was said. It seemed best, to erect the *Foundation* of *Palentia* first, being near; both because the season was sharp, and *Burgos* seated so bleak; and likewise to please the good *Bishop* of *Palentia*: so, I did, as hath bin spoken. But because, being there, the *Foundation* of *Soria*, where all things were

now in readines , was offered to me , it seemed best to go thither spe-
dily , and from thence to pass over to *Burgos*. The *Bishop of Palentia*
was of the same mind , who also liked well (as I had requested him) the
giving an account thereto to the *Archbishop* : so , after my departure
for *Soria* , he dispatched from thence a *Canon* on purpose , called *John*
Alonso. The *Archbishop* writ to me very affectionately , and kindly ,
that he much desired my going thither; he consulted with the *Canon* about
it , and writ this to the *Bishop of Palentia* , referring all to him: telling
him , that what he did , was , because he knew , we needed the consent
of the City of *Burgos*. In conclusion , his resolution was , that I should
go thither , and treat with the City first ; and , if it refused to consent
thereto , that he little regarded ; because those of the *Community* were not
to ty his hands from permitting it : And that , his *Lordship* being present
at the founding the first *Monastery* of *S. Joseph* of *Avila* (where at that
time he was *Bishop*) he might remember the great uproare , and opposi-
tion , which happened ; that therefore he intended to prevent the like here ,
that it was inconvenient for me to erect a *Monastery* , unless endowed ,
or consented to by the City , and that for this he said it. The *Bishop of*
Palentia , hearing from him , that I should go thither , accounted the
business done ; and justly : so , he sent to tell me , we should go with-
out more ado. Methought I perceived some want of courage in the *Arch-
bishop* ; and I answered him with the return of my thanks for the favour ,
he did me ; but intimated , that I liked worse the asking the City's consent ,
if they should afterward refuse , than the doing it without saying any-
thing to them ; for , so , his *Lordship* would be in danger of greater
opposition , and contest. I seemed to divine in this my trusting little to
the *Archbishop* , if we met with any resistance ; especially if I procured
not the foresaid consent ; and also I accounted it difficult , by reason of
the contrary judgments , which in such occasions usually intervene. I
writ to the *Bishop of Palentia* , desiring him , that , since Winter was so
near , and my infirmities were so great , that I could hardly endure a
place so cold , this thing might rest for the present. I would not mention
on my doubting of the *Archbishop* , because , he being already displeased
and averse in interposing things inconvenient , when as he had formerly
discovered so much forwardnes therein , I vwould occasion no difference
betvveen them , being friends : so I vvent from *Soria* to *Avila* , little
thinking then , that I should go so speedily to *Burgos* : and my going to
the *Monastery* of *S. Josephs* at *Avila* for certain reasons vvas very neces-
sary.

There lived in the City of *Burgos* a devout Widow , named *Catharine*.
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de Tolosa, born in Biscay; whose vertues, wwould I recount, as her Penance, Prayer, Charity, her bountifull Alms, excellent understanding, and authority, I should be too long. She (some four years before) beftovved tvvo Daughters *Nuns* in the *Monastery* of our *Lady's Conception* of our *Order* in *Valladolid*: and disposed of tvvo more in that of *Palentia*, staying till it vvas founded, vvhom she caused to be admitted there before my going thence, bringing them herself. All four proved exceeding vwell, as the true Daughters of, and educated by, such a Mother; for, they resemble d' *Angells*: she gave them fair Portions, and every thing else very amply, being exceeding vwealthy: and in all things that she doth, she shewvs a great munificence, and liberality, as she vwell may; for, she is rich. When vve vvere in *Palentia* vve vvere so confident of the *Archbishops* licence, that there seemed to be no doubt thereof; vwherupon I earnestly intreated her to find me a House in *Burgos* to let, for the taking possession; and to get a Grate, and a Wheele put up at my charge, vwithout imagining, that she should be at any cost therein, but only lay it out for me. She so much desired this *Foundation*, that she vvas greatly displeased, it vvas not done presently: and so, after my going to *Avila* (as I said) I then not thinking thereon, she notwithstanding vwas not idle; but conceiving nothing vwanted, save the City's consent, vwithout telling me therof, she began to procure it. She had tvwo Neighbours, eminent persons, and great Servants of *God*, the Mother, and Daughter, vwho exceedingly desired it: the Mother vwas called *Donna Maria Manrique*, vwho had a Son a *Conservator*, called *Don Alonso de S. Dominico Manrique*; the Daughters Name vwas *Donna Catharina*: they both perswaded *Don Alonso* to propose it to the *Community*. *Alonso* spake to *Donna Catharina Tolosa*, to know, what ground-work was laid for erecting a *Monastery*, and how it would be maintained; for, without some provision, the *Community* would not allow it. She told him, she would engage for giving us a House, if we wanted one, and for finding us *Victuals* (as in effect she did) and thereupon delivered in a petition subscribed with her name. *Don Alonso* managed it so well, that he obtained the licence of all the other *Conservators*, and *Commissioners*, and went to the *Archbishop* with it in writing. *Donna Catharina*, when she began to negotiate the businels, writ me word, but I took it for a Jest, as knowing how difficultly poor *Monasteries* are admitted; and, because I knew nothing, nor suspected, that she should engage her self to do what she did, I conceived that much more would be required.

While this was doing, one day within the *Oltave* of *S. Martin*, as
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I was recommending it to our *Lord*, I thought with my self, what I should do, if the City granted the licence; since, for me to go to *Burgos*, with so many distempers, to which cold is so contrary (which then was extreme), methought seemed impossible to be endured; yea it appeared rashness, to take a Journey so long, being but lately returned from one so tedious, and sharp, as that from *Soria* to *Avila* was; besides, that the *Father Provincial* would not let me go. I considered, that the *Progress* of *Palentia* might go very well; for, all being made plain, and easy, there would be no difficulty. Whilst I was musing thus, and resolving not to go, our *Lord* spake to me these words, whereby I understood, that the licence was already granted: *Regard not cold; for, I am the true heat: the devill useth all his power to hinder this Foundation; use you yours for me, to get it finished: and negle&t not the going in person; for, it will availe much.* Hereupon I altered my mind; for, though nature relents sometimes in things of difficulty, yet never the resolution to suffer for this great *God*: and I beseech him not to heed these complainings of my weakness, but command Me what he likes best; since, by his favour, and assistance, I shall not faile, to do it. There were then great snows and colds but that, which most discouraged, and dejected me, was, my want of health; for, having that, methought, I should have accounted all nothing. This very oft afflicted me, in this *Foundation*. The cold was afterward so little (at least that, which I endured) that truly, methought, I felt no more, than when I lived in *Toledo*: our *Lord* hath sufficiently made his Word good, answerably to what he told me in this particular.

It was not many days before they brought me the City's Licence, with letters from *Catbarina de Tolosa*, and her friend *Donna Catbarina de Marique*, wherein they extremely pressed my going speedily; for, they feared some disturbance, and molestation, by reason the *Fathers Minims* were then come thither to found; and likewise the *Mitigated Fathers Carmelites* had bin attempting the same for some time; and also a little after came those of *S. Basil*. So many *Orders* meeting at the same time, and place, to found, was a notable impediment, and very remarkable; but an occasion with all of praising, and thanking our *Lord*, for the extraordinary charity of this place; for, the City very freely gave leave to all, though it were not in that prosperity, it bad bin formerly in. I had always heard the charity of this City commended, but I never thought it so exceeding great: some favoured this, others that *Order*: but the *Archbishop* had an eye to all the inconveniences, that might ensue, foreseeing, and remedying them, conceiving, so many poor.

poor *Orders*, once admitted, could not be maintained: and perhaps the same *Religious* repaired to him; or the devil devised it, to hinder the great benefit, God doth those places, wherein are many *Coyants*: since he is as able to maintain many, as few.

Now, this vvas the reason, those devout Women hastened me so that by my good vwill I vwould have gone avay presently, if I had not had busines to do; for, I considered how much more I vvas obliged, not to lose so fit an opportunity by my default, than they, vvhom I savv so industrious therein. By the vvords, I had heard from our *Lord* it appeared, vve vvere to meet vwith great opposition; and I neither knevv, nor could imagine, from vvhom, or vvhence. For, *Catharina de Tolosa* had vvrirt me vvord already, that she vvas secure of an house for the taking possession; vvhich vvas that, she dvvelt in: the *City* vvas free, and courteous; & the *Archbishop* also; therefore I could not conjecture, vvhence this resistance should proceed, vvhich the devills vvere to procure; for, I never doubted, but those vvords, I heard, vvere from *God*. In fine, our *Lord* gives *Superiors* greater light; for, vvriting thereof to *Father Provincial* (as far as I understood) he staid not my going; but only asked me, vvhether I had the *Archbishop's* licence in Writing. I answvered him, I vvas certified from *Burgos*, that they had treated vwith him about it, and that leave vvas also desired from the *City*, and vvas granted, vvhich the *Archbishop* had approved: so that concerning this, and his vvord passed in this matter, there seemed no reason to doubt.

The *Father Provincial* vwould needs go vwith us to this *Foundation*, either because perhaps he vvas then at leisure, having done preaching that *Advent*; and, being to go make a *Visitation* at *Soria* (for he had never seen it since it vvas founded) he vvent not much about; or else he vwould go to take care of, and look to my health; for, the season vvas exceeding sharp, and I ancient, and infirm; he conceiving, my life to be of some importance. And it vvas certainly a speciaall providence of *God*; for, the vvays vvere so spoiled by the great rains, that it vvas very necessary, both He, and his Companions should go, to be able to make triall, vwhere vve might pass; and to help to pull the Coaches out of the Cart-rotes, and holes; especially betvveen *Palentia*, and *Burgos*: for, indeed, it vvas a bold adventure to go thence, vwhen vve vvent. The truth is, our *Lord* told me; *We might safely go; that I shoud not fear: for, He would be with us*. Though this at present I told not to *Father Provincial*, but he vvent clearing me up in the excessive troubles, and dangers, vwherein we vvere: particularly in a certain passage called *The Bridges*, near *Burgos*, vwhere in divers placees of the vway, vvas such abundance of

Water, that it rose above the Bridges, so that they were not seen, and we could not discern our way; for, all was Water, and a huge Deep both on the one side, and on the other. To conclude, it seemed great rashnes to pass that way, especially by Coach; for, had the Coach misfled never so little, and gone aside, it had fallen into the deep Water, and, bin quite swallowed up; and in such danger one of them was. We took a Guide in an Inn, that was hard by, who knew the ways, which indeed were extreme dangerous. And who can express the bad lodging, we had? for, we could not keep the usuall Stages, by reason of the ill ways, so that very often, the Coaches sticking in the mire, and holes, we were fain to take the beasts out of one Coach, and join them to the other, to draw it out, whilst we went afoot. O what did the *Fathers* that went with us endure! for, we chanced to light upon certain yong, and heedless Drivers: but the presence, and company of *Father Provincial* was a great consolation; for, he took care of all, and that with such pleasantnes, that he seems uncapable of ever being troubled at any thing: so that, what was great, he facilitated, and made to seem litle; though not the Bridges; for, there, even he was much affraid: for, who would not fear, entring into a world of Water, without seeing any way, or having any Boat? Notwithstanding that our *Lord* had encouraged me, I forbore not to fear: vwhat then did my Companions do? We were Eight in ali; two, that were to go back with me; and five, to stay at *Burgos*; four *Quire-Nuns*, and one *Lay-Sister*. All Confessed in passing the *Bridges*, and asked my Blessing, and went on repeating the Creed. I forced my self to comfort them, shewing no discomposednes, but chearfully bespeak them, *Courage, my daughters, what greater happiness wish ye, than, if need be, here to become Martyrs for love of our Lord? Let me alone; for I will go first; and, if I be drowned, I earnestly beseech you, not to pass on, but return back to the Inn.* It pleased our *Lord*, that I going first secured the others passage over. But I went with a very violent distemper in my throat, which took me in my journy at *Valladolid*; my fever never leaving me, so that I eat in extreme pain. This made me not so sensible, as I use to be, of the troubles, and crofs accidents of this Journy. This Malady hath held me till now, being the end of *June*, though not so violent, yet painfull enough. All came off well-pleased; for, the danger past was recreation to discourse of. Suffering for obedience is a great matter; especially to them that practise it so constantly, as these *Nunns*. I think, I have not yet mentioned the *Father Provincial's Name*; it is *Father Fr. Heronymus Gratianus de Matre Dei*, whom I have somtimes heretofore spoken of.

Through

Through this ill way we got to *Burgos*, extreme wet with a great Showre, that fell before we entred the Town. *Father Provincial* would have us before all other things go visit our *Lord on the Cross*; to recommend our busines to him; and also that it might be night, as being yet too early to enter the City without noise. It was *Friday*, when we got thither, the day after *S. Pauls Conversion*, the 26. of *January*. It was determined, to found speedily, and I brought divers letters from *Canon Salinas* (of whom I spoke in the Foundation of *Palentia*, and whose pains herein was no les.) and other principall persons, to their kinred, and friends, with all earnestness to favour, and promote this *Foundation*, as they did; for, presently the next day all came to see me, and amongst them the *Conservators* of the City, who told us, they were not a whit sorry for the licence granted, but exceeding glad, I was come; and bad me consider, wherein they might serve me. Now, all our fear being concerning the City, upon such a profession, I accounted the busines quite done. And though (before we had repaired, by reason of the extraordinary rain, to the house of the good *Catharina de Toloza*) we intended to acquaint the *Archbishop*, ere any one knew thereof, to the end the first *Mass* might be patiently said, as I use to do in most places; yet notwithstanding, in regard we were all so wet, we forbare this.

That night we rested, nobly entertained, and feasted by that holy *Lady*, but it cost me dear; for, we stood a prettywhile by a great fire, to dry us, which, although it were in a good Chimny, made me never theles so ill, that the same night I had a Dizziness in my head, and such violent vomitings, that it caused an Ulcer in my throat, and I spate blood: so that the next day I could not hold up my head, much les do any busines: but lying on a Couch, which they had provided at the side of a Window, that was over against a Gallery, where was a Grate, before which we drew, a Curtain, I treated with those, that came to speak with me; they standing without; which put me to great trouble. So, betimes in the morning *Father Provincial* repaires to the *Archbishop*, to ask his Benediction, imagining there was nothing else to be done. He finds him so changed, and displeased, at my coming without his leave, as though he had never commanded me, nor ever treated about this matter; and so he expressed himself to the *Father* to be exceedingly offended with me. Yet he confessed, he had commanded me to come; but said, he meant, I should come alone to consult of the busines; not with so many *Nuns*, as in a thing concluded on. *God deliver us from the pain*, he was in, when it was told him, that the matter had bin transacted already with the City; as he advised, and nothing more remained to be negotiated, but only the found-

founding ; and that the *Bishop* of *Palamia* had told me (upon my asking him, whether it were fit for me to go, without first acquainting his *Lordship*) it was needless ; because the *Archbishop* had formerly desired it : all little availed. Thus this busines went : but it was *Gods will*, that this *House* should be founded ; for (as he himself said afterward) had we certified him thereof beforehand, he would flatly have forbidden our coming. At length the *Archbishop* dismissed *Father Provincial* with this Answer, that unless we had a Revenue, and House of our own, we should never think of getting a Licence ; that we might do well to go back : as if the ways, and weather were now so good for it. O my *Lord*, how evident is it, that thou rewardest with a Cross him that doth thee any service ! oh what an estimable recompence is it for those, that sincerely love thee, could we presently arrive to know its value ! but then we would not have had this gain, as conceiving, that it defeated our whole Designe. But the telling us further, that that which was to buy a House, and to settle a Revenue, must not be taken out of what the *Nuns* brought, there being no thought, as the present times are, how otherwise it could be effected, sufficiently shewed us, that the busines would quite miscarry, and that there was no remedy : though I was not of that mind ; for, I continued still confident, that all vvas for the better, and that these vvere rubbs, and impediments contrived by the devill, to hinder it, and that *God* vwould prevale ; mastering, and overcoming all difficulties. *Father Provincial* vwas not at all disturbed therat, but vwent avvay very joyfull. *God* vwould so have it, that he might not chide me for not procurring the licence in vwriting, as he had advertised me.

There came hither to me one of the Friends, to vvhom, as I said, *Canon Salinas* had vwritten : and he, and this kinred thought fit to desire the *Archbishops* leave for saying *Mass* in the House, to avoid going through the Streets, being very dirty ; and to go abroad barefoot seemed inconvenient. The house, vvhерein vve lived, had a very commodious Hall, which above ten years had served the *Fathers* of the *Society of Jesus* for a *Church*, when they first came to *Burgos* : and therupon we thought it not amiss to take possession there, till we had a house of our own. But he could never be perswaded to let us hear *Mass* in it, though two *Canons* went to intreat him thereto. All that could be got from him was, that, having revenue, we might found there, till a House were purchased : And to this end we must put in security for buying one, and for removing hence. We soon got security ; for, *Canon Salinas*'s friends offered to be bound ; and *Catharina de Tolosa* to settle the Rent, to the end it might be founded. Herein, and in making the conditions were

were spent above three Weeks ; we mean while never heard *Mafs*, but on *Holidays* very early in a *Church*, going through much Water, and dirt, that was in the Streets, I being very ill of a fever. But *Catharine de Tolosa* shewed her self so civil, that I was carefully looked to in a place apart, where we lived retired, and she gave us all a Months Diet, with extraordinary courtesy, as though she had bin each ones Mother. *Father Provincial*, and his Companions lodged at a friends house of his, called *Doctor Manso*, a *Canon* and *Professor* of the great *Church*, they having bin *Collegiates* in *Alcala*: the good *Father Provincial* was much displeased, to see how nothing was done, not knowing how to leave us, weary also of staying here so long. The Rent therfore being settled, and security put in for buying the House, the *Archbishop* bad it should be delivered, to his steward, who should presently dispatch it. The devill was not wanting to interpose himself; for after we had well looked about us, when we thought, there remained no further obstacle, and about a Month being spent already in procuring the *Archbishops* resting satisfied with what had bin done: lo, on a sudden the steward sends me a note, certifying me, that leave would not be granted, till we had a House of our own: that the *Archbishop* would not have us found in that, where we lived, because it was moist, and the Street exposed to noise: that there were, I know not what, intrigues in assuring the goods assigned for the Rent; and divers other things, (as if the busines were but just then to begin) and that in this matter no other answer must be expected: lastly, that the House must be to the *Archbishops* liking.

Father Provincial, when he saw this, was exceedingly displeased, and likewise all We; for, to procure, and purchase a Seat for a *Monastery* (as is well known) requires time: besides the seeing us go abroad to hear *Mafs* offended him; for, though the *Church* was not far off, and we heard it in a *Chappell*, without any ones viewing us, yet was it very troublesome both to his *Reverence*, and us. That which was then agreed on (if I mistake not) was, to quit the busines, and return back again. I could not endure that; remembing the words, our *Lord* spoke to me; namely, that I should endeavour it in his behalf; and I was so confident, it would be done, that I never troubled my self about it; only *Father Provincial*s sadness afflicted me, and that he came with us, grieved me extremely, as one, that knew nothing, how much his friends were to help us, as afterward I shall relate. I being thus afflicted, and my Companions much more (though this little affected me, save only that of *Father Provincial*) our *Lord* said to me, out of *Prayer*, these words: *Now, THERE SA, be courageous.* Hereupon I laboured more earnestly to

perswade Father Provincial to be gone , and leave us : his Divine Ma-
jesty questionless ordered it , and put it into his mind ; for , Lent now
drew near , and he must needs go to preach .

He , and his Friends together procured , that the Hospital of the Con-
ception (I mean some rooms therein) was given us , where was the B.
Sacrament , and Mass also was said every Day . Herewith he was som-
what satisfied , but it met with much opposition , and delay ; for , a
Widow had hired a very fair Chamber therein ; which though she should
not use , nor dwell in of half a year after , yet would she not only not lend
as it , but was much displeased , that certain Rooms in a higher part of
the House near the roof were given us , from one of which was a passage
to her lodging : and was not content to have it locked on the outside , but
made it be nailed within . Besides , the Brothers , to whose care the
Hospital was committed , feared , lest we should deprive them of the Ho-
spitall (a thing without any ground , save that God permitted it for our
greater merit) so they desired that Father Provincial and I should pro-
misse before a publick Notary , and engage our selves , to be gone from
thence presently without any dispute , whensover they bade us . This
methought was very hard ; because the Widow there being rich , and having
kinred , I feared , lest we must remove , when ever the toy took her . But Fa-
ther Provincial , being more advised , would have us , do whatever they de-
sired , for hastening our going thither . They gave us but one Chamber ,
and a Kitchin : but a great Servant of God , called Fernandez de Ma-
ranza , governed the Hospital , vvhio gave us tvvo more for a Locutory ,
and thevved us great kindness , as he useth tovvard all , bestovving much
Alms on the Poor . The like also did Francis de Cuevas , vvhio , being chief
Postmaster here , took great care of the Hospital ; and likevvise , in
vhat he could , as occasion vvas offered , alvvays assisted and protected
us .

I vwillingly mention our first Benefactors , because both the present ,
and succeeding , Nuns , are bound to remember them in their Prayers :
a debt much more due to Founders . Although my principall intention
vwas not , that Catharine de Tolosa should have bin Founderess , nor had
I ever such a thought ; yet her vertuous course of life merited this of our
Lord , vvhio disposed and ordred things so , as this Title cannot justly be
denied her . For , besides her paying for the House , vvhenevver we had not
vwherevvith , vhat all those diversions , and contradictions of the Arch-
bishop cost her , is unutterable : for , the meer apprehension that it should
not be erected vwas an extreme affliction to her ; and she vwas never vveary
of shewving us kindness . The Hospital vwas a great vyay from her house ,
and

and yet she came almost every day to see us vwith great civility, and sent us vwhatsoever we needed: vwhereas there wanted not those, that flouted and murmured at Her for it: so that, had she not had great courage, as she hath, it vvas enough to make her desist, and leave all. The seeing astervward vwhat she suffered afflicted me exceedingly; for, though she most-vwhat concealed it, yet sometimes she could not dissemble it, especially vwhen they touched her in conscience; vwhich she keeps so pure, that, though some persons have given her great occasions, there vwas never heard vword to proceed out of her mouth that offended God. They said; She vwould go to hell, and that she could not do as she did, having Children. She vwas directed in every thing by the advice of the Learned, for, though she vwould have done othervise, I vwould not have consented thereto for any thing in the vworld, nor have permitted her to do a thing vwhich she might not, though the erecting of a thousand *Mona-
steries* (howv much more of one?) vvere omitted. But the course that vwas taken, and consulted of being secret, no v wonder, though it vvere thought more, than it vwas. She ansvered vwith that meeknes (vwhich is admirable in her) and vwith such patience, as sufficiently discovered, that God endued her vwith wit, and vertue to satisfy some to tolerate others, and gave her courage to endure all. O howv much abler are the servants of God for great undertakings, than those of high birth, (vwanting this qualifiation) though *Catharine de Tolosa*'s family lacked neither eminent vertue, nor splendour, she being delcended of very noble An-cestors.

Now returning to what we were discoursing, when *Father Provincial* had found us a place to hear *Mafs* in without going abroad, he ventured, and took heart, to go for *Valladolid*, where he must preach, though exceedingly afflited, because he saw from the *Archbishop*: no ground to hope, he would give a Licence: and, albeit I laboured to put him in hope, he could not believe me. And indeed, he had weighty reasons (which I now mention not) to expect little good: but if he had little cause, his friends had less, and therupon increased his discouragement. When he was gone, I was more chearfull, and hearty, for (as I said) his disquiet was my chieffest trouble. He left us in charge to procure a House of our owne, a thing difficult enough; for hitherto, with all the diligence used therein, none could be found fit to buy. Our friends were molt sollicitous concerning us, (especially those two of *Father Pro-
vincial*) and all agreed, not to speak a word therof to the *Archbishop*, till we had a Houle: who said still, he desired this Foundation more than any; and I believe it, for he is a very good Christian, who would not

have said it, if it were not true; but his actions shewed it not; because he demanded things, according to our small means, seeming impossible: which was a plot, and Stratagem of the devill to defeat the busines. But, *Lord*, how visible is thy power! since thou tookest the same course to better, which he, to hinder, it. Be thou eternally Blessed.

We continued from *S. Mathias Eve*, that we came into the Hospitall, to *S. Josephs Eve*, still seeking very carefully to purchase a House; that so the *Archbishop* might grant the licence; but none of all, we were in hand with, was fit, for we found inconveniences in all. They proposed to me a *Gentleman's*, which of a long time, was to be sold, and though so many *Orders* had bin to look for a house, it was *God's* providence, that none of them liked it; at which they now all wonder, and some of them heartily repent it: two persons had told me of it, but so many disparaged it in severall respects, that I altogether neglected, or forgot it, as a thing no way convenient. Being one day with *Licentiate Aguiar* (a friend of *Father Provincials*, who took great care to find us out a houle) he told me, he had seen severall, and in all the City met with none for our turne; so, from what was told me, seeing no hopes of finding one, I began to call to mind this, that we refused, (as I was saying) and considered, that, though it were as bad as was reported, if we bought it to remedy our present necessity, it might afterward be sold again. This my conceit I communicated to *Licentiate Aguiar*, increating him to do me the favour to go and see it. He disliked not the designe, and, having never seen the house, on a sudden one day, the weather being extreme sharp, and tempestuous, he would go and view it. There was a Tenant in it, who had no great liking, it should be sold, and would not shew it him, but by that little, that could be seen without, he liked it well, and was much pleased with the situation: so we resolved to buy it. The *Gentleman* that owed it, was not here, but had left power to sell it with a *Priest*, a servante of *God*, whom our *Lord* excited with a desire of selling it to us, and of dealing very justly & honestly with us. It was agreed, I should go see it, and I was so well contented, and satisfied therwith, that, had they demanded twice as much, as I judged they would ask, I should have takerst it, and have thought it a good Bargain, for the Landlord was offered as much, two years before, and he would not take it. The next day presently comes the *Priest* with the *Licentiate*, who, understanding what his price was, had a mind, the Bargain should immediatly be concluded. I acquainted some friends of mine therwith, and they told me, I paid 500. Crowns more than it was worth. I related it to the *licentiate*; But he conceived it to be sold under the worth, though

I paid all that was asked ; I was also of the same opinion , and shold not have stuck at it ; for , methought , they gave it me for nothing : but , the mony being the *Orders* , therfore I made scruple therein . This Treaty was on the Glorious Father S. Josephs Eve , before *Mas* : I bid them meet again after *Mas* , and then a finall conclusion shold be made . The *Licentiate* , being a man of very good judgment , saw plainly , that , if it began to be divulged , it would cost a great deale more , or must be let alone : and so took the *Priests* word , for his returne hither after *Mas* , taking great pains herein . We went and recommended it to *God* , who said to me : *Why stay you for Mony ?* letting me understand , that it was not well . The *Sisters* had very earnestly requested S. Joseph , that they might , against his day , have a House of their owne ; and they not thinking of having one so soon , he obtained of our *Lord* this favour for them . All urged me , that the purchase might be concluded , and so it was . The *Licentiate* found a *Notary* at the gate , which seemed a special providence of *God* ; he brought him into us , telling me , we must make an end : he sent for *Witnesses* , and locking the Hall-door , that none might know it (for that was his main fear) the Sale was concluded , and confirmed with all its wonted and due Circumstances , the same *Vigil* of the glorious S. Joseph , by the singular care , and pains of this extraordinary Friend .

None ever thought , it would have bin sold so cheap ; and therfore , when it was known in the City , presently , there began to appear purchasers enow ; and to say , the *Priest* , that sold it , had given it away , so that the cheat being so notorious , and palpable , the Bargain would be broke : the good *Priest* suffered much herein . They straight gave notice to the *Gentleman* , and his Wife , that owed the house , what had passed , who were so glad , that their house was made a *Monastery* , that they approved it , and accounted all as well done ; though now they could do no other . The next day the Writings were drawn , and the third part of the Mony that the *Priest* asked for the house , paid ; in some things about the agreement they used us hardly , but we took all patiently . It seems impertinent , I should insist thus on the buying of this house ; but indeed they , who observed these things particularly , conceived it a Miracle , both for the cheapness , and for that so many Religious persons , that had viewed it , and neglected the taking it , were blinded : and , as though they had not formerly lived in *Burgos* , those , that saw it , were astonished , blaming , and taxing them of stupidity . Besides the *Orders* mentioned , there was enquiry after a house for a *Monastery* of *Nuns* , (nay for two) one wherof had bin founded but lately , and the other had

their house burnt downe , and so the *Nuns* want out of it . There was likewise another rich person that went about searching to build a new *Monastery* , and had lately seen it , and rejected it : these all repented themselves afterward . The City did so ring herewith , that we saw evidently , that the good *Licentiate Aguiar* had great reason , to conceal the busyness of the purchase ; and to use such diligence therein : for we may truly affirme , that next under *God* it was he that bestowed the house on us . A good understanding doth much in every thing : and he having such an excellent one , and *God* giving him such a good will , he by his parts effected this work . He spent above a Month in assisting , and contriving things for our accommodation , and with little charge . It was evident , our *Lord* had reserved this House for himself , for almost every thing was found ready fitted to our hand . The truth is , as soon as I saw it , and how every thing was as it were made on purpose for us ; methought it was a Dream to behold it dispatched so quickly . O how amply hath our *Lord* recompenced our sufferings , by bringing us to a terrestriall Paradise ; for , in respect of the Garden , the prospect , and the Water , it seems no les . Be he eternally Blessed . Amen .

The *Archbishop* presently had notice thereof , and was very glad , we had sped so well , imagining his breaking promise to have bin a means thereof , and he had reason . I writ to him , I was exceeding glad , his most Reverend Lordship was pleased therewith and would halten the fitting it , that he might do me an intire favour once for all . Having said this , I made hast to the house , being advertised , that they would delay us herein [as to the licence] till I know not what Writings were drawne up , and made ready . And so , though the Tenant were not gone (for there was a litle more trouble to get him out) we went , and dwelt in part of it . Instantly they told me , the *Archbishop* was much offended therat : I sought to pacify him , the best I could , for , being a good man , though somtimes he be in choler , it soon passeth . He was displeased likewise , when he understood , we kept a Grate , and a Wheele , conceiving this should not be done without his order . I writ to him , that this in the Houses of persons of Recollection vvas usuall ; but , as touching the Instituting a *Monastery* , I had not attempted so much as to set up a *Cross* there , that it might not seeme to be one : and this was truth . But , for all the good will he shewed us , he would not yield to grant us a Licence .

He came to see the House , and was much satisfied , expressing great kindness to us ; though not so far as to grant the licence , yet he put us in good hopes therof : the business was , certain Writings were to be drawn

drawn up for *Catharine de Tolosa*, which till they were we done, were much affraid, he would not give it us. But *Doktor Manjo* (the other friend of *Father Provincial*) was very intimate with him, & watched an opportunity to mind him therof, and get his assent; for, he was much troubled to see us in such a condition. For he would not let us have *Mass* said in the House that we had bought (which had a *Chappel*, that served for no use, except the saying *Mass* in it for the owners) but we must go abroad to hear it in a *Church*, every *Holyday*, and *Sunday*. (And it happened well, it was so near) though from the time we went thither, to the erecting of the *Monastery*, passed about a Month, more or les.

All the learned said there was cause enough for his granting us this licence, and the *Archbishop* himself, being a great Scholler, saw it likewise; but it seems to have bin nothing else, but that our *Lord* would have us suffer; and I thought it so best: but there was such a *Nym*, as passing through the Street trembled with the feare it caused in her. The drawing the Writings cost no small trouble; for, one while he required Security, another while present *Mony*, and many other Circumstances: though herein the *Archbishop* was not very faulty, but a certain Steward of his that much opposed us; who had he not taken a journey, upon an occasion by *God* at that time presented him, wherby another succeeded him, it is likely, we should never have obtained this so desired Licence. How much *Catharine de Tolosa* suffered herein is unutterable: she bare all with such patience, as made me astonished; and was never weary of providing for us. She furnished all the Utensiles for the House, with the Beds, and divers other things, being her self abundantly stored therewith at home: for, it was manifest, she had rather her ovvn house should lack somethynge, than vve want any thing that vvas necessary. Some, vwho have founded *Monasteries* for us, have given us more vwealth; but none of them have sustained the tenth part of the trouble, that she: and, had she not had Children, she vwould have given all she could possibly: being so desirous of seeing this House finished, that all she did in relation thereto, seemed but little to her.

When I savv such delaying, I vvrte to the *Bishop* of *Palentia*, intreating him to vvrte again to the *Archbishop*, He remained then exceedingly displeased vwith him; for he took vwhathever the *Archbishop* did to us as his ovvn ease, and as done to Himself. That vwhich made us vonder vwas, that the *Archbishop* never conceived, that he had vronged us in any thing. I intreated him, as I vvas saying, to vvrte to him again, and tell him, that, since vve had a House, and vwhat he desired vwas effect-ed, he vwould once make an end. He sent me an open Letter for the
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Archbishop, so smart, that, by delivering it, we apparently hazard-ed the losing, and defeating of all; whereupon *Doctor Manso*, who was my *Confessor*, and Counsellor, would not let me present it: for, though it were very civil, yet in it were inserted divers truths, which, considering the *Archbishops* temper, were likely to incense him, being already offended too much at some things, he had sent to acquaint him with, though formerly they were great friends: so that he told me, as by our *Lords* death those became friends, who formerly were not such; so on the contrary for my sake they two, who had bin friends, were turned enemies: I answered him, hereby he might perceive, what a one I was. To my thinking, I proceeded with special caution, and diligence, that they might not fall out with one another: I requested the *Bishop* again with the best reason I had, and could alledge; to write another milder, and more affectionate letter to him, setting before him the service he might do our *Lord* therein. He did what I so much desired, which was no small matter; for when he saw it was a service to *God*, and a kindness to me (since whenever it was so, he hath still shewn himself very favourable to me) he offered me his assistance to the utmost, and writ me word, that whatever he had done for our *Order*, was nothing, in comparison of his extraordinary desire of serving it. At length the Letter coming proved so effectuall (being seconded by the diligence of *Doctor Manso*) that the *Archbishop* granted us the licence, and sent it us by the good man *Ferdinand de Maranza*, who was not a little joyed thereat. The *Sisters* were more afflicted with their long expectation that day than ever, and *Catharina de Tolosa* beyond all the rest, so that none could comfort her: for it seems our *Lord* would have us most dejected, at the time, wherein we were to receive consolation and content; and I, who never despaired hitherto, was a little discouraged the evening before. Blessed, and praised for ever be his holy Name.

He gave *Doctor Manso* leave to say *Mass* there the next day, and place the *B. Sacrament* there: so he said the first; but the high *Mass* was celebrated by Father *Prior of S. Paul*, of *S. Dominicus Order*, (to which this of Ours hath always bin much obliged, as also to them of the *Society of Jesus*.) *Mass* was sung very solemnly, with *Musick*, and *Minstrells*, that came freely of their own accord, without sending for. All our friends were exceeding glad, and wel-nigh the whole City, for they pitied us greatly, seeing our usage: and the *Archbishops* dealing seemed to them so ill, that many times I disliked more, what I heard spoken against him, than what I suffered from him. The joy of *Catharine de Tolosa*, and the *Sisters*, vvas so excessive, as caused great devotion in me; vwhere-upon

upon I said to God; Lord, what do these Servants of thine pretend to, but to serve thee, and to see themselves for thy sake locked up in a place, from whence they shall never go out? One that never tried, can not believe, the contentment received in these Foundations, upon the seeing our selves under Clasure, where no Secular person can come; for, though we exceedingly love them, yet this is not sufficient to dispossess us of the great contentment we have to see our selves retired, and alone. Methinks it is, as when many fish are taken in a net out of a river which, except presently thrown in again, cannot live: so such are Souls used to live in the Currents of the Waters of their Spouse, which, being taken thence, and seeing the Nets, and snares of the things of the World, cannot truly live, till they returne thither again. This I observe in all these Sisters, and find by experience, that those Nuns, that perceive in themselves a desire of going abroad among secular persons, and of conversing much with them, have not met with that living Water, wherof our Lord speaks to the Samaritan, and that their Spouse hath hid himself from them; and justly, since they delight not to stay with Him. This I feare, ariseth from two things; either that they embrace not this State only for love of Him; or, after undertaking it, acknowledge not the extraordinary favour God hath done them, in selecting them for himself, and delivering them from subjection to a Man, who oftentimes is a means of ending their days, and God grant he be not also of losing their Souls. O my Spouse, true God, and Man, is this a favour to be undervalued by us? Let us praise him, and render thanks to him, my Sisters, that he hath done us it; and let us never be weary of blessing so great a King, and Lord, who hath prepared for us a Kingdom, that shall never end, for a few slight troubles that shall end to morrow, and that are sweetened with a thousand Delights. Be he for ever Blessed. Amen.

Some days after the *Adonastery* was founded, Father Provincial and I thought there would arise certain inconveniences from the Revenue assigned by *Catharina de Tolosa*, for which the *House* might be liable to a Suit, and she be some way disturbed: whereupon we chose rather to trust God, than continue in a condition, wherein for our sakes she might receive prejudice. So for this, and other reasons, meeting in a *Chapter* together we all quitted, and with the leave of Father Provincial before a *Notary* disclaimed the Goods, and Estate, she had assigned us, and gave her up all her Writings. This was done very privately, lest the *Archbishop* might know of it, who would have thought he had wrong done to him, wheras the *Monastery* had the losse. For when it is known, that the *Monastery* is founded in poverty, there is no feare, but all will help it:

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whereas, this being accounted a *Monastery* endowed, there seems to be some danger, that they should want some provision as to the present: for after the decease of *Catherine de Tolosa*, by a certain course, which her two Daughters have taken, who are this year to be Professed in our *Monastery* at *Palentia* (which was, that they having formerly passed over their right to their Mother, afterward at the time of making their profession *Catarina* annulling this their act to her, makes them renounce their right in favour of the *Monastery* of *Burgos*) and by another Daughter, she had, that intendeth to take the Habit here, leaving to her the free disposall of her Fathers, and her owne estate, which she leaves also in favour of this House; Thus there accrues as much, as the Revenue, that she gave: all the inconvenience is, that the *Monastery* enjoys it not at present: but it hath bin always my opinion, they would never want for any thing. For, that *Lord*, that provides for the other *Houses*, that live of Alms, those, that contribute liberally thereto will here also raise up persons to do the like, or find out other ways, wherby to maintaine them. Although (none having bin erected in this manner) I somtimes besought him, that since his *Majesty* was pleased it should be founded, he would provide maintenance for them, and things necessary: nor indeed was I willing, to go from hence, till I saw some *Religious Woman* admitted here. And Being one time thinking hereon, after I had communicated, our *Lord* said to me: *What dost thou doubt of? this is provided for already, thou maist go well enough.* Letting me understand, that they should not want necessaries. Whereupon I was as contented at these words, as if I had left them an ample Revenue, being never more troubled about it. Presently I began to speak of departing, conceiving, I did nothing here, but stay, and take my pleasure in this *Monastery*, because it liked me well: wheras in other places I might do more good, though with more trouble. The *Archbishop*, and the *Bishop* of *Palentia* continued still great friends: for straight the *Archbishop* shewed us great expressions of kindness, giving particularly the Habit to a Daughter of * *Catharina de Tolosa*, and another *Religious*, that was admitted here: and hitherto there have not failed some still, to provide liberally for us; nor will our *Lord* suffer his *Spouses* to want, if they serve him, as they ought. His *Divine Majesty*, of his infinite Mercy and goodness, grants them grace hereunto. Amen.

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* *Palentia*; and two Sons, she had, turned *Discalced Friars*.

+ I think fit here to set down, how the *Nuns of S. Joseph of Avila*, which [†] Of the House was the first that was erected, and was founded under the obedience Translating of the Ordinary, became since subjected to the Order. When it was founded, *Don Alvarez de Mendoza* was Bishop, who is now of *Palentia*, and all the time he lived in *Avila*, favoured the *Nuns* exceedingly; and, when Obedience was rendered to him, I understood from our Lord, that it was then expedient; and it fell out well for us afterward; for, in all the differences, and troubles of the Order, we found great assistance from him; besides many other occasions that fell out, whereby the love, with which he owned, and patronized us manifestly appeared. He never yielded, that we should be visited by any other Priest, but himself; and he did nothing in that Monastery, more or less, save what I desired him. In this manner passed some Seventeen years (for I remember not justly) wherein I never thought of altering their obedience. These years being expired, the Bishoprick of *Palentia* was conferred on the Bishop of *Avila*; and, I being then in the Monastery of *Toledo*, our Lord told me, it was expedient, the *Nuns of S. Josephs* should render Obedience to the Order, bidding me endeavour it: for, unless it were done, that House would soon come to be relaxed. I as having before understood, that it was meet to commit it to the Ordinary, conceived here a contradiction; so that I knew not what to do. I told it to my Confessor, the now Bishop of *Osma*, a great Scholler: he said, the matter was not much; for, that was expedient then; this now: (which by many instances since is very evidently seen to be true;) and he judged it better for that Monastery, to fare as the rest did, than stand single. So he made me go to *Avila* to consult about it. I found the Bishop of a far different mind: he would by no means consent thereto; but I acquainting him with some things, that might prove prejudicial to the *Nuns*, whom he tenderly loved, he thought further on it. And having a sharp understanding, and excellent wit, God also assisting, he thought on other reasons more important than those, I alledged, and so he resolvled to do it; and though certain Priests told him, it was not convenient, that availed little. The Votes of the *Nuns* likewise were requisite, of whom some disliked it, and thought it hard: but, in regard they greatly loved Me, they acquiesced in the reasons, I proposed to them; especially seeing that that Bishop, to whom the Order had bin so deeply obliged, was removed; and I was to be gone. This swayed them

much, and so this busyness of so great consequence was concluded : for both all they, and those abroad also, have seen evidently, how the *Monastry* had bin ruined by the contrary course. O ever Blessed be that *Lord*, vwho vvith such affectionate providence takes care of vwhat concernes his Servants. *Amen.*

All that is contained in this *Book* hitherto is penned by the Holy *Mother Teresa de Jesu* ovn Hand, in the *Book* vwhich slie entituled *Of her Foundations*, vvwhich, together vvith the other Books vwritten in her ovn hand, are to be found in the famous Liberary of the *King of Spain* in the *Monastry Royall of S. Laurence* in the *Escorial*. That vvwhich followvs, is done by the *Mother Anna de Jesu*.

TO

The Foundation of the *Monastry of Granada*, which the Father Fr. Hieronymus Gratianus de Matre Dei, being Provincial, enjoined Mother Anna de Jesu to write.

YOur Reverence commands me to write the *Foundation* of this *Monastry of Granada*: who, having so weak a Head, find my Memory so bad, that I know not whether I can call it to mind. Yet I shall relate what occurs to me.

In October 1585: It was four Years since Father Fr. Jacobus de Trinitate, (God rest his Soul) being Deputy Provincial for your Reverence, came to Visit the *Monastry of Vies*, where three or four Months were expired, since I was *Prioress*, and I was extreme ill: when the *Visitor*, seeing me so, began very seriously to discourse about coming to found at *Granada*: for divers considerable persons, and women of quality, and rich, desired it, offering liberally thereto. I conceived, nothing, but his good opinion, made him think, they would anyways assist us; and so I told him, I took those words for a Complement, and that there would be nothing found of what they said; nor would the *Archbishop* of the place give leave to found a *Monastry* in Poverty;

verty; where were so many Religious already as could scarce subsist, for that *Granada* was wasted, and the late years very barren. The *Father*, though he saw, what I said was true, yet, out of the desire he had of erecting this house, he conceived new hopes afresh, saying that *Laguna a Licentiate*, Auditor of that Court, had promised great assistance; and also privately *Father Salazar* of the *Society of Jesus*; saying, that they would get the *Archbishops* licence. I accounted all uncertain, as it was; though in regard the *Father* urged the businesse so much, I earnestly recommended it to *God*, and desired the *Sisters*, to beseech him to enlighten us therein, to understand, whether it were expedient. His *Majesty* did so, and that very clearly, telling us; *It was true, for the present, there was no accommodation, nor favour from men: but, forasmuch as the other Monasteries were erected in confidence of the Divine Providence, so should this too; for He would take care therof, and would be greatly served in it.*

When this befell me; I had newly Communicated, and it was now three Weeks, that the *Father Visitor* had bin here, giving order, and employing means, for effecting it. I, notwithstanding all the doubts, and excuses, that I mentioned, resolved upon it at that very instant, that I made an end of Communicating, and said to *Sister Beatrice de Sancto Michaeli*, who was Door-keeper, and likevvile then received with me: *Believe it, God will have this MONASTERY of GRANADA erected; therfore call hither FATHER Fr. JOHN DELLA CROCE, to inform him, as my CONFESSOR, this which our Lord hath given me to understand.* I declared it in Confession to the foresaid Father *Fr. John della Croce*, who was my Ghostly *Father*, he thought fit, we should give an account therof to *Father Visitor*, who then was there, to the end he might write to your *Reverence*, that with your leave it might be effected. And the same day the matter was determined, and all things necessary thereto prepared, to the great contentment of the *Fathers*, and of the whole *Covent*, who understood, that this *Foundation* was agreed on. We writ to your *Reverence*, and to our Holy Mother *Teresa de Jesu*, requesting four *Nuns* of those in *Castile* for the *Foundation*, and likewise intreating the *H. Mother*, to come herself and found it. Being so very confident, it vvould succeed vwell; vve procured the sending Father *Fr. John della Croce* vvith another *Religious Man*, to provide all things necessary, for removing the *Nuns*. So, leaving *Vcas*, he vwent to *Avila* to find our *H. Mother Teresa de Jesu*; from thence they sent an express to your *Reverence*, living then at *Salamanca*. Upon sight of the Letters, your *Reverence* granted our requests, referring to our

our H. Mother the appointing what Nuns she thought fit , and what we said were necessary . Her Reverence assigned two of the Monastery in *Avila* , the Mother *Maria de Christo* , who had bin *Priores* there five years ; and Sister *Antonia de Spiritu Sancto* , who was one of the first four , that took the habit of *Discalced* in *S. Josephs of Avila* : and from the Monastery of *Toledo* Sister *Beatrice de Jesu* , one of the ancientest Religious likewise , and our H. Mothers Niece . Her Reverence could not come , being about to depart for the Foundation of *Burgos* , which was erected at the same time : and , a good while before , She had writ to me , that she would not come to this Monastery of *Granada* , when it was erected , because she believed it was Gods will , that I should found it . But it seemed impossible to me to settle any Foundation without her Reverence ; whereupon I was much afflicted , when I saw the Nuns were come to *Veras* without Her , on the day of our *Lady's Conception* . I read a Letter of Hers which they brought me , in which she said , she willed , merely for my satisfaction , she could have come , but that our great God commanded otherwise : that she was very confident , that all should succeed very well at *Granada* , and that his *Divine Majesty* would greatly assist me , as began punctually to appear shortly after , in manner following .

Whilst Father *Fr. John de la Croce* , and his Companion went into *Castile* for the Religious Women , the Father Deputy Provincial *Fr. Jacobus de Trinitate* went to *Granada* , to negotiate the assuring to himself those advantages , which he had in hope , that afterward when he had them in his possession he might write to us to come . The good Man questionless laboured exceedingly , to secure somthing of the many offers made him , and to get the leave of the *Archbishop* . There was no means to obtain any thing , and yet out of his good meaning , he still writ Letters to *Veras* , intimating the many , and great overtures made to him . I laughed thereat , and writ to him , not to heed them , but to hire us a House , as well as he could , where we might be ; for the Sisters were come from *Castile* already . The poor man was grieved , for he could not so much as do this : and , though he went to speak with the *Archbishop* , and used the assistance of two of the ancientest *Auditors* to him , namely *Don Lewis de Márredo* , and *Licentiate Laguria* , yet was there no way to make him willing to let us come : but rather by very sharp words he expressed his aversion thereto . He said , he would dissolve all the Monasteries of Nuns there ; and that they might be ashamed , to desire to bring more Religious thither in times , and years of such scarcity , and dearth ; seeing apparently they could not be maintained : with severall other things tartly enough

enough. The *Auditors*, who spake to him thereof, were sufficiently disgusted, yet notwithstanding they sought somewhat to pacify him, seeing the many things we writ from *Veas*, and that we hastened it; alledging that little served for ten *Nuns* of us, that were to come. They also furthered the *Father* privately, and assisted him, that one of the *Magistrates* here hired him a house: which afterward, when he had got, he writ to us to come, exceeding sorry to see, he had nothing else, but that. We tarried at *Veas* expecting; being resolved, and ready to depart, upon the least word, or intimation from the *Father*, signifying so much to us: for, so it was agreed between the *Father Fr. John della Croce*, and me, and the *Sisters*, who were there, the 13. of *January*. Standing in this expectation I entred into the meditation which we use to make at night thinking on those words spoken to *S. John by Christ our Lord*, at his *Baptisme*: *It becomes us to fulfill all righteousness*: my interior being very much recollected upon it, and having forgotten the *Foundation*. I began to hear a great Noise of many Cries, Yells, and Howlings joined together in confusion; and at the same time it seemed to me, that they were devils that made that lamentation; because the Messenger was come with orders for our going to *Granada*: musing hereon, the Cryes and Howlings that I heard increased so, that I fwooned, my naturall forces beginning to faile: being thus vweakened I clung to *Mother Priores*, vwho vwas hard by: she, thinking it to be meerly fainting, ordered somthing to be given me to eat. I making signes intimated that they should forbear, and look, vwho vwas at the Wheele: they vvent, and found the Messenger there, vwho brought us directions for our departure.

On the sudden there arose such a violent Tempest, as if the vwhole World vwould be covered vwith Water, and Stones; and I fell also so ill, that it vwas thought I vwould dy. The *Physicians*, and all those, that savv me conceived it impossible, I could begin my Journy, because my pains vvere extreme, and the troubles, I endured, supernaturall: but this made me more courageous, and to make the more hast, that the beasts, and all things requisite to our journy the *Monday* followng, might be in readines; for the Messenger coming on *Saturday* evening, the *Sunday* immediately ensuing vwas not convenient for travelling: not to say I vwas so extreamly ill, that I could not hear *Mass* though the *Quire* vvere very nigh my *Cell*. Notwithstanding, that *Monday* vve vvent, at Three a clock in the Morning, to the great joy of all the Company, vwho conceived, by this Journey of theirs our *Lord* vwould be greatly served. We vvent betimes, though the vways vvere so dirty by the former Shovvers, that our Mules could scarce pafs. We got to *Day-*
fuenses.

fuentes, the Fathers that went with us (who were Father *Fr. John della Croce*, and Fa. *Fr. Petrus de Angelis*) discoursing with me, what course might be taken, to incline the *Archbishop* to give us a licence, and not to stand so difficult on our admission. The same night that we came to *Dayfuentes*, we heard a most terrible Thunder, and with it fell a Thunderbolt in *Granada* upon the *Archbishops* own Pallace, near the room where he lay; it burnt part of his *Library*, and killed some Cattell; and put the *Archbishop* into such a fright, and amazement, that he fell sick with the disorder of it. This Accident, they say, somewhat allayed, and lenified him; for none ever saw, in the memory of man, a thunderbolt fall in *Granada*, at such a time of the Year.

The very same day he, that had let out the house to *Father Deputy Provincial*, into which we were to come, went from his word, and revoked the writing he had passed to *Don Lewis de Mercado*, and *Licentiate Laguna*; alledging that, he knew not, when he gave it him, that the house was to be a *Monystry*: but, understanding it now, neither he nor divers others, that dwelt in it, would be gone: and so it proved; for neither those *Gentlemen*, who under-hand favoured us, nor fifty thousand Crowns, engagement only for hiring of an House, prevailed to make them quit it. As soon as these good friends understood, we were so nigh, that within two days we should be there, they knew not what to do: when accidentally *Don Lewis de Mercado* said to his Sister the *Lady Anna de Pernalosa* (which thing he concealed from *Father Deputy*, nor said any thing to him of this matter) Sister, You would do well, to see, now the *Nuns* are on their way, whether they could alight here, at our House, affording them a lodging where they may be apart, till they find some corner to live in. The good *Lady*, who for some years had not gone out of an *Oratory*, much lamenting her *Widowhood*, and the death of her only *Daughter*, began immediatly to raise up herself, and take heart (as she told us) and with all speed to set about dressing up her House, and preparing all things necessary for the *Church*, and for accommodating us, which she ordered for us very handsomely, though somvhat scantled, in regard her house was but little. We came thither on the day of *S. Fabian* and *S. Sebastian*, by three a clock in the Morning, for that hour suted best for our not being seen, and for privacy. We found the good *Lady* at the street-door, where she received us vwith many Tears, and expressions of devotion: we shed some too out of tender-heartedness, singing *Laude Dominum* vwith great joy to see the *Church*, and its situation in a *Porch*. But, not having the *Archbishops* licence, I desired, it might be locked up, and that the *Fathers*, vwho

who were with the *Father Deputy*, would not think of tolling a Bell, nor of saying *Mass*, publickly, or privately, till we had the *Archbishop's* consent, which I hoped in *God*, he would shortly grant us.

I sent to give him notice of our arrivall, beseeching him to come and bestow his Benediction on us, and set up the *B. Sacrament*: for, though it were a Holiday, we would not hear *Mass* till his *Lordship* appointed "it. He answered with great kindness, and civility, saying; That we "were welcome, that he was exceeding glad of our coming, and that "he wished he could rise, that he might come and say the first *Mass*: "but being ill he sent his *Vicar* to say it, and do all, that I should desire. And so the *Vicar* coming, which was about seven a clock that very morning, I intreated him to say *Mass*, and Communicate us all, leaving us the *B. Sacrament* set up by his owne hand: which he did immediatly with great Solemnity. Those *Gentlemen* the *Auditors* were in our *Church*, and such a multitude, that it was strange, they could know of it so soon; for, the same day we came, at Eight a clock, the *B. Sacrament* was already set up, and divers *Masses* said. All *Granada* came, as though they came to gain a *Jubilee*, and all with one voice proclaimed, that we were *Saints*, and that our *Lord* vouchafed to visit this place by our coming thither. The same day *Don Lewis de Mercado*, and *Licentiate Laguna* went to visit the *Archbishop*, who kept his Bed, being ill of the distemper by the Thunder, which fell two nights before; and they found "him chafing, at our coming: they replied, If his *Lordship* were so much "displeased thereat, why did he grant his licence? for, the *Monastery* "was now established. He answered: „I could do no less; for I offered "extreme violence to my self; because I cannot abide to see *Nuns*: but "I meane to bestow nothing on them, since I am not able to keep them, "that are under my charge and government. And so we began to enjoy in words and in deeds, our beloved poverty: for, though the *Lady Donna Anna* bestowed Alms on us, it was very sparingly, and none relieved us from abroad, seeing us live in her houle, whither so many poor flocked, and whence such store of Alms was given to almost all the *Monasteries*, and *Hospitalls* of the City; whereupon they imagined, we could not lack for any thing; and yet we did lack so, that very often we were not able to subsist with what that *Lady* gave us, had not our *Discalced Fathers* of the *Covent of Martyrs* furnished us with some small quantity of Bread, & fish; though they had but little themselves, it being a year of such famine, and scarcity, that *Andaluzia* felt it in great extremity. We were so ill stored with Bedding, that, except what we brought with us in our Journey, we had none, so that Two, or Three only of us

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could be accommodated therewith : and therefore so many of us by turns lay on them anights , the rest lying upon certain Matts , that were in the Quire. This proved so pleasant to us, that to enjoy it we discovered to none the Want we suffered , but laboured to hide it especially from this devout *Lady* , lest we might grieve her. And she , seeing us so contented, and taking us for pious and penitent persons , observed not , that we needed more , than what she allowed us. Thus we spent most of the time , that we lived in her House , which was seven Months. In all which from the first day we were oft visited by the graver sort , and the *Religious* of all *Orders* ; who discoursed of nothing else , but the temerity in beginning these Houses in such poverty , and without any foundation of humane assistance , and conveniences. We answered them , that therefore we enjoyed more the Divine : and in confidence of the experience of Gods care and providence , which we have had triall of in our *Monastryes* , we were not solicitous , nor troubled to begin them thus ; but desired rather , that none might be founded after any other manner , as holding this the securest way. Many laughed at the hearing this , and at the seeing how chearfull we were being thus straightened ; for indeed we were very strict in keeping our Clausure : in so much that *Don Lewis de Mercado* himself , that lived in the same house , never saw us without a Veile , nor can any one tell the marks , nor describe the shape , and features of our countenances. Herein we did no more , than we use always , but this was thought a great matter in this City. Divers persons (I mean Women) of all conditions came to ask the habit , and amongst above two Hundred , who consulted thereof , we met not with one , that to us seemed capable of receiving it , according to our *Constitutions* : and therefore we avoided speaking to many , others we deferred , telling them , they must first understand our manner of living , and by this means we might try their inclinations ; and that , till we light on a House , there was not room for more , than were there already. We enquired for one very diligently , but by no means could find one for our purpose , either to be sold or lett.

Meanwhile I was somewhat perplexed , and troubled , to see so little supply offered to us by the People : and , as oft as I reflected thereon , methought I heard that , which our *Lord Christ* said to the *Apostles* : *When I sent you to preach without Scrip , and without Shoes , lacked ye any thing ?* And my Soul , answered , No certainly , with a confidence , that , both in spiritualls , and temporalls , his *Divine Majesty* would abundantly provide for us. Without any soliciting there came , and we had Masses said , and Sermons by the most eminent , and famous Preachers , and Priests,

Priests, that were in all *Granada*, without almost any care taken therein: many delighted to hear our Confessions, and to understand our lives; as likewise to know that inward assurance which (as I said) God gave me, that we should want for nothing: as appeared in one instance, that befell me presently after I arrived here. It hapned, that with great weight, and much particularity I heard internally that Verse of the *Psalme*, that faith: *Scapulis suis obumbrabit tibi, & sub pennis ejus sperabis*: Psal. 90. *He shall overshadow thee with his Shoulders, and under his Wings shalt thou trust.* Hereof I gave an account to my *Confessor*, who was Father Fr. John de la Croce, and to Father Doctor John Baptist Ribera of the Society of Jesus, whom I acquainted with what befell me, both in, and out of, *Confession*. They both thought these things were pawns, and earnests given by our *Lord*, that this *Foundation* shoulde prosper, and succeed very well, as hitherto, for these four years, it hath bin seen to do. Blessed be his holy *Name*; seeing that during all this time the *Sisters*, that came with me to the *Foundation*, assure me, they have had a more particular Presence and greater Communication of his *Divine Majesty*, than they had ever perceived in their whole life.

This was very apparent in the proficiency they daily made, and in that which (by report of all) with their example they caused in the *Monasteries* of the *Religious* here. For I understood by the *President* Don Pedro a Castro, that, after our coming, there was wrought a great change in them, I mean in the *Nuns* of other *Orders*, whereof are many in *Granada*. Among other favours, which (as I said) our *Lord* did us, we enjoyed one extraordinary; which was the perceiving the Person of Jesus Christ our *Lord* in the most holy *Sacrament* of the *Altar*, to keep company with us after such a manner, as that, we seemed visibly to perceive his Corporall Presence; and this was so generally, and ordinary, that we often discoursed amongst our selves thereof, saying, that the *B. Sacrament* never had wrought such an effect upon us in any place as here: for, from that instant, wherein It was set up in our little *Church*, it caused in us this consolation, and in some it lasts till now; though not so sensible, as in those first Seven Months.

These being expired, we light on a House to be let, to which (without the Landlords knowing so much; for, the Tenant, that dwelt in it had left it empty) your *Reverence* at that time made us pafs very privately, who were come from *Baeza* to procure conveniences for us, yet could get no better than this: Till about Ten Months after our *Lord* began effectually to move certain of the prime *Gentlewomen* here; who, assisted by their *Confessors*, without leave of their Parents, and kinred, who by

no means would give their consent to their entring into so strict an *Order*, came privately to take the *Habit*. We within a few days gave it to Six with great solemnity, though with the extream disgastng of their Kinred, and muttering of the City, conceiving some dreadfull matter in the entring into it : whereupon (as we have bin told) they take speciall care , and caution to look to their Daughters. For , concerning the first whom we admitted (which is *Sister Mariana de Jesu*) her Father and Mother died shortly after her entring into *Religion*; and , they spread a rumour , that of grief : but she never was in the least troubled at her coming hither, but on the contrary rather hath shewen excessive joy , and gratitude for the favour our *Lord God* hath done her , in calling her to our *Order* : as all the rest have experienced , who have entred , and those , which have bin since admitted. When they were professed , we endeavoured with their portions to purchase a House ; and , though many were talked of , so far , as that it came to the drawing up Writings for some of them , yet the Sale of none was concluded of,till we resolvod on the taking that of the *Duke of Sessa* ; which , by reason of the great difficulties in the selling it , we thought it ridiculous to wish for ; and so did all , that heard of it ; though it were the most commodious , and best seated , in all *Granada*. I determined to consult about the buying it : because the *Sister* , the writer of this present Relation (whom I name not in regard your *Reverence* vvill knowv the person by the Hand) assured me above two years ago , that our *Lord* had signified to her three severall times in Prayer , that the *Monastery* should be founded , and settled in this House of the *Duke's* ; vvwhich she understood vvith such certainty , that nothing could hinder her from believing, but that it vvould accordingly succeed: vwhereupon it vvwas effected , as your *Reverence* knowvs , and at present vve live in it.

ANNA DE JESU.

A Letter of the *Holy Mother Teresa de Jesu* to the Venerable *Mother Anna de Jesu Prioress* of the *Discalced Carmelite Nuns* in *Veas*, in commendation of the Venerable Father *Fr. Joannes de Cruce*, and in answer of one, wherein she complained of wanting a *Spiritual Master*, and *Guide* for her *Nuns*.

Daughter,

I Have a good mind to laugh, seeing how much without cause you complain; having therewith you my *Father Fr. John della Croce*, a heavenly and divine person. And I tell you, *Daughter*, that since he went hence to *Veas*, I have not found in all *Castile* another *Spiritual Father* like him, nor so zealous in the way to Heaven. You will not believe the desolation, and Melancholy, that his absence, and the want of him causeth us. Let them know, they have a great Treasure there, in the person of this *Holy Man*. And let all the *Nuns* of this House treat with, and communicate their souls to him, and they shall find, that they are sufficiently furnished, and how much they will advance, and proceed on in all things of Spirit, and Perfection: our *Lord* having given him a particular grace to this purpose.

Teresa de Jesu.

A Letter of the same *Holy Mother*, written to a *Nun* of another *Order*, who was grieved, that she lived in a *Monastery* that was too full, and had too much business.

B Efore these *Monasteries* of ours of *Discalcedates* were founded, I lived five and twenty years in that of the *Incarnation*, where are about a hundred and fourscore *Nuns*: and, because I am in haste, I only say, That to one that loves *God*, these things, though they be a kind of *Crosses* unto them, yet are an advantage to their *Souls*, and no way prejudicial, if you shall be pleased to reflect, and consider, that only you, and *God* live in this House: and whilst you have no Office that requires your ha-

ving an eye to things , hinder not your self with them , but observe the vertue thou shall perceive in any one , to love it in her , and gain benefit to your self , not applying your mind to those defects which haply you may see in her . This hath stood me in such stead , that , living amongst such store of *Nuns* , as I have said , they conduced as much to my purpose , as if I had lived alone , nay also benefitted me : for at length (my dear *Mistress*) we may in every place come to love this great *God*. Blessed be He , for that none is able to hinder us from doing this .

Teresa de Jesu.

In the Additions to the Life of the B. Father Fr. Lewis Bertrand is a Paragraph in manner following .

THe B. Mother Teresa de Jesu Foundress of the Discalced Carmelites , Men and Women , in the first years , that she began to attempt a Reformation of her Order , endeavoured to consult to this purpose with divers spirituall persons , particularly with Father Bertran : sending him a letter , acquainting him with her desires , and certain Revelations , she had had about it . The Father Fr. Lewis recommending to God in his prayers and Sacrifices her good intentions , at the end of three or four Months answered her in this manner .

Mother Teresa , I received your Letter : and because the busines , about which you ask my Opinion , tends so much to the service of our *Lord* , I desired to recommend it to him in my poor Prayers , and Sacrifices : and this was the reason , I deferred to answer you . I now bid you in the Name of that same *Lord* , arme your self for so great an enterprize , for He will assist , and succour you : and in his behalf I certify you , that , before the end of fifty years , your Order shall prove one of the most Eminent , that is in the Church of *God* : Who keep you , &c .

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From

From *Valentia.*

The Letter of our Holy Lord Pope Paul the Fifth to Henry the Fourth King of France, for promoting the Order of Discalced Friars Carmelites in his Kingdome.

To our most Dear Son Henry, the Most Christian King of France: Pope Paul the Fifth.

Our Most Dear Son in Christ, we send you Greeting, &c.

With this only Comfort, amidst so many, and great labours, and cares of ours, are we delighted; that, though the perpetuall Enemy, of Mankind never ceases by new arts, and impediments to hinder the worship of God, and salvation of Souls; yet on the other side there are not wanting some, who, enflamed with a zeal of Gods honour, and love of their Neighbour, endeavour both by word, and example, to reduce into the right way those that stray, and afford help, and consolation to those, that labour in our Lords Vineyard. Of which number doubtles are our beloved Sons the *Discalced Friars Carmelites*, who, both in this our flourishing City, and throughout almost all Italy, to the great benefit of Souls labouring continually in Prayers, Fastings, Preachings, Confessions, and busied in other pious Works, have given examples of extraordinary devotion, and piety; so that they are deservedly beloved of us in our Lord, and by all had in great Veneration. Having understood therefore, that this Religious Order is much desired in your Majesties most flourishing Kingdome, and, conceiving the presence of these devout men to be very usefull for the restoring that ancient Ecclesiastical Discipline, for which sake this Kingdome justly was entitled the most Christian; which you no les prudently, than piously, shew You do desire: we are willing by these our letters again and again to exhort your Majesty, to introduce into your Kingdome of France this Order of Discalced Carmelites: for, we are confident, You will shortly find great benefit by their conversing with the Subjects of your Majesty. Indeed it is strange, how prevalent they are, in instilling devotion into Mens minds; as those, that seek for nothing else, but the Glory of God, and saving of Souls, observing extreme Poverty in simplicity of heart. Our Venerable Brother Francis Cardinal of Joyosa, who will deliver You these Letters, shall on our behalf more fully also inform you of the

Sanctity

Sanctity of this Religious Order, and more effectually excite you to this Pious Work : We desire you to give him altogether the same Credit, which you would do to us, if we spake with you in Person : and finally assure Your self, it will be most acceptable to us, to understand, that our Beloved Sons the *Discalced Friars Carmelites* are received in your most spacious kingdome of *France* under your *Majesties* patronage and protection, and have settled a firme, and stable refidence there, as We desire. We beseech *Almighty God*, to keep you with his continual protection, and, together with the increase of zeal for repairing *Catholsick Religion*, augment in you the gifts of his holy Grace : and We from the very bottom of Our heart do bestow on your *Majesty* our *Apostolicall Benediction*. Given at *Rome* at S. Peters the 20. of *April 1610.* of our *Pontificate* the Fifth.

12. Cal.
May.

The End of the Foundations of the Monasteries of the *Discalced Carmelite Nuns.*

of the Customes observed by S. Teresa in her Journies, when she went to found any Monastery. Extracted out of the Bishop of Tarassonne. Lib.2.Cap.37.

Having spoken of the *Foundations* erected by this *Blessed Mother*, it will be seasonable here (before we relate her Death) for the clearer discovering the *Spirit of God* that inhabited in her, to describe the Method, and order, the *Holy Woman* observed not only on the way, but likewise in the Monasteries through which she passed, either those of her own, or any other *Order*.

First, when the *Holy Mother* went any Journy, she procured to have with her some *Religious Men* of the *Order*, if there were any to be got; and also some *Secular Priest*, that was of good life, and reputation. Commonly *Father Julian d' Avila* accompanied her, one of great virtue, and piety, as we have formerly said. The first thing she did, after her arrivall at any place, was the hearing *Mass*; she communicated every day;

day ; a thing never omitted by her , for whatever bundles , or haft . She ever took some *Companions* with her ; some to leave in her new Foundation , others for usuall Associates : among the rest she chose for her ordinary Companion *Anna de Santo Bartholomeo* , yet living , and a *Prioreſs* in *Paris* : a Religious Woman qualified , as became her , whom among so many the *B. Mother* selected , and with a particular eye designed for her Society , and consolation .

The *Holy Woman* and her Companions commonly travelled in Waggon s , as conceiving it a poorer and plainer way , than that of Coaches . Her Religious went in them with great Recollection ; for , even upon the way , also being , where they might be seen by any secular Persons (though these Women) they never laid by their *Veils* ; and , if any forgot herself herein , the *Holy Mother* reprehended her ; and this she herself very punctually , an strictly observed .

When they came to their Lodging , she took care to have a *Chamber* very retired , and fast bolted , where her Religious might repose : and , when there was no convenience for this purpose (as in some Inns usually happens) they used course Coverlets , or some Hangings , and made themselves select , and handsome partitions , that her *Nunns* might neither see , nor be seen ; and might have litle converse , or acquaintance with any ; for , herein she used great caution , as one that cordially loved all integrity and purity ; she likewise set a *Porteress* in the Inn , as though she had bin in a Monastery , to receive Messages from abroad : in fine she used as much Discipline , and Clasure , as if she had in bin her own House .

Now , *Saints* in quality resembling Precious , and resplendent Stones , which retain the same value , and splendour , whether in the Casket , or in the street ; the *H. Mother* , and her Company , in whom so many Vertues shined when being in their *Monasteries* , were not obscured , or overcast upon the way . For , amidst the joltings of the Waggon , the trouble , and wearisomnes of the journy , they kept their *Prayer* , as in the *Quire* , and for this end had their set-Hours , which they measured by an Hour-glass , as if they had bin in a *Covent* : and , many times upon the way , the *H. Woman* , and her Companions spent the whole night in Vocall , and Mentall , Prayer . They rang a little Bell at the hours of *Silence* , as their *Rule* prescribes , and kept it as strictly , as if the *Rule* here also , obliged them . And , which is more to be wondred at , so great was the respect , and veneration , they bore to the Sanctity of the *Mother* , that those which resorted thither , not only Priests , and other Persons of her Company , but the Boyes , and Waggoners (beyond

their usuall wont) observed Silence, all the time the Nuns forbare to speak. Afterward when they rang to signify, that the time of Silence was ended, these persons shewed great contentment therein. They all went very willingly with the H. Mother, and were not tired with their labours, nor satiated with the sweetnes, and grace of her discourses; for, they were beyond measure pleasing, and delightfull to all. She gathered from emergent occasions on the way matter for spirituall conferences concerning God, wherewith she both delighted, and somtimes greatly wounded with contrition those who accompaigned her: yea they that at other times used to swear, and jest much, took more pleasure in hearing her, than in all their sports and pastimes, as themselves often confessed.

The H. Mother procured that all that went in her Company should render Obedience (a duty so justly owing to herself, as well for her Office, as her Person) to some Religious Man, if there were any; or else to the Priest, that accompanied them; and she was the first that yielded such submission. And such was her love to this Vertue, that in any Foundation when she constituted a Prioress (whom for divers years she by her sole authority settled there, and chose) presently she rendred her Obedience, and submitted herself to her, not as Foundress, but as one of the most inferiour in the Covent; craving leave ofher for all that she was to do. Which she practised when she came to any Monastery of Nuns, of another Order; for, she immediatly rendred her Obedience to the Superioris, as if she were really her own.

As to Poverty, she was excessive therein (if this excellent Vertue be capable of excels:) She went often out of her Monastery, without taking any thing for her Journey; yet she never wanted necessaries, nor also in the least a confidence in God. That Foundation most pleased her, which she erected in greatest Poverty: as also she used to say, that, for founding a Monastery, she needed only a Bell, and a House to be hired. Being a Foundation she refused a Carpet, and a Chafing-dish; as thinking neither ofthem usefull among Discalced Nuns. And she not only rejected these, but other things of a great value: as much shunning, as others seek, Riches.

Thus, according to the Testimony given by the Duchess of Alva, *Donna Maria Enríquez*, it fell out, that, she giving her (upon the understanding her need, and poverty) certain Jewells to a great worth and value, the Holy Mother accepted them very thankfully; because she would not seem to slight her Gift; but, when she took her leave of her, privately calling the Woman belonging to her Chamber, she gave her
the

the Jewels, to return them to the Duchess; whereat she was much edified, and astonished I as unaccustomed to see that by her contempt, which the World so much prizes, and adores.

The same Duchess with great importunity had obtained leave of the Provincial of the Order, for the H. Mother, at her coming to the Monastery of Alva, to visit her first, and alight at her house before she went to the Monastery, which was in the same Town. The B. Mother, accomplishing what by Obedience she had bin enjoined, was as courteously received by the Duchess, as she had bin earnestly desired. She intreated her to sup with her (because she came by Night to her House) but the H. Woman, notwithstanding her weariness, and necessity (which may be presumed to be great in a Person so laden with diseases, and spent with labours) would by no means condescend to her request, as thinking it not fit, having a Monastery in the same Village, to eat a bit out of it. So, on this occasion, and the more to enjoy the Holy Mother, the Duchess commanded all her Family to sup, not supping her self, till Midnight; at what time the H. Mother breaking through the Duchess's importunities, to detain her yet longer, retired to her Monastery: thus leaving the Duchess no less admiring, than edified.

She was likewise very strict (as one whom God had set for a Mistress, and Pattern to others) in Regular Discipline: for, besides what hath bin spoken concerning Silence, and Prayer, Obedience, and Retirement, and the other Vertues, being in a journey, she as duly obserued the Fasts of the Order, as if notwithstanding her want of health, and strength) she had bin obliged thereto: and, when she came to the Covent, the Priores of the House knowing her custome, and that she would not admit of a Quilt; for easing not only the pains of her Journey, but of her sicknes, had a mind (for a disguise) to lay one under the Straw-bed, the ordinary Bed of the Discalced (as if this could have much relieved her;) the Holy Mother presently discerned it, and causing it to be removed, sharply reprehended the Infirmary, that had put it there.

In her Travells, whilst her health permitted, she dressed Diet for the rest, as she did likewise in the Monasteries; and this she preferred before the being a Foundress: which though she was, and that of so many Houses, yet she liked not the Title. This may be said of the order, which, as to the Exteriors, the H. Mother obserued, when she travelled: but

that which cannot be said is * the Interior , and that exceeding high Prayer , wherein that holy Soul went wholly immersed (if I may so speak) and engulfed in God ; * the Charity , and Zeale of Souls that flamed in her breast ; * the vehement desire of suffering for the Love of God ; things , which engaged our Lord to assist , and encourage her exceedingly , and bestow a great Crown upon her , and do her the favour in her days to see , and eat of the fruit of the Tree , which by her Hands He had planted ; as his Divine Majesty promised her in a Revelation , which she had in the Year 1571 . wherein he said to her these Words . Take courage ; since you see how I help you : I have desired , You should gain this Crown , in your days You shall see the Order of the Virgin greatly advanced .

Addita ex R. P. Ribera de Vita B. Matris Teresiae

Lib. 3. cap. 15. 16.

*Teresa leaves Burgos , comes to Alva ; where She makes a
holy End in our Lord .*

THese things being set in order , Teresa with incessant prayers continually importuned our Lord , that , since by his appointment , and direction , this Monastery was happily begun , he would also provide , that it might neither want maintenance , nor other conveniences of living : whereupon her principall desire was , to see the day , wherein some Virgins might be admitted into this house , whose stock , and portions might settle the state of the Monastery . Whilst she was solicitous about this , our Lord said to her ; Why doubt you ? that busyness is done already ; so that you may securely depart . By which words she conceived , that our Lord would himself take such care of that House , that at no time it should lack supplies of necessary provisions . This assurance therefore confirmed , and quieted her as much as if it had had a fair yearly revenue settled on it . So , after a few days respite She began to consider of her returne : for , she conceived her pains at Burgos for the future needless . Having therefore made all things ready for her journy , she went from Burgos to Palencia , and from thence to Medina , intending to go directly thence to Avila , where she was Prioresse , and there below the holy Veile on Terefa de Jesu . But the most High had otherwise appointed

appointed. For, at *Medina* she found Father *Antonio de Jesu*, at that time *Superior* of the whole *Order*. He here attended the *B. Mothers* coming that he might thence take her along with him to *Alva*, at the request, and importunity of the *Duchess Maria Henriquez*. As soon as she was by *F. Antonio* acquainted therewith, she found a great, and strong reluctance in herself, in regard she judged her presence at *Avila* very necessary, and was extreme sorry the *Duchess* should thus stay this her intended Journy, so that the trouble she suffered within her mind was incredible. But, having hitherto bin always most observant of her Superior's commands; to the utmost of her power, she, being so near her end, was not unwilling to obey here likewise in as great perfection, as she could; in imitation of him, who [Philip. 2.8.] became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. So, she was carried in a Litter to *Alva*, not without great pains, and very much sickness. Insomuch, as when she came to *Peynaranda* the next Towne, she felt such excessive torments, and an incredible decay of strength, that she swooned away, which sad Spectacle moved all that were present to pity her. There was nothing at hand to give her for recovering her spirits in that fainting, and languishing condition, but some Figs, and there was but one Egg to be got in all the Town. *Anna de S. Bartholomeo* was exceedingly troubled, that in so great a necessity she could afford the holy Mother no help, or ease. But she comforted her, saying, *Do not afflict your self, Daughter; these Figs are very good; and many poor people have not such.* The next day, going to another Town, they had onsy boiled Herbes with Onions among them, to repaire the meanness, and shortness of their Dinner the day before: yet with these she staid her appetite, as well as she could; though such food ill for her health. And the same night, being the *Vigil* of the *Apostle*, and *Evangelist S. Matthew*, she was brought to *Alva*.

When She was come, being spent, and sick, *Joanna de S. Spiritu the Superioris*, and her Companions earnestly intreated her, she would ly down, and take a little rest, whose motion, and requests she yielded to, saying, *Good God, how weary do I find myself! these twenty years, to my remembrance, I went not to Bed so soon, as I have to day.* Yet, getting up in the Morning, she both diligently visited the House, above, and below, and went to Church to hear *Mass*; where likewise she with great fervour of spirit, and relishes of devotion received the *Holy Eucharist*: and thus by fits at certain spaces somtimes relapsing into her distemper, oþertimes rising out of her Bed, she passed some days. Till, on the Feast of *S. Michael the Archangel*, having heard *Mass*, and received the

Blessed Sacrament (for she now , with the usuall fervour of devotion , daily frequented the Sacred Mysteries of the Altar) taking her Bed , she never rose out of it more : for , she begin to be ill of a Bloody Fluxe ; which was thought to be the cause of her Death .

Three days before she deceased , she spent a whole Night well-nigh in earnest prayer , and devout supplications to God : when it grew light , she called for *Antonio de Jesu* to hear her *Confession*. It is reported , that our Lord then revealed to her the day of her Death. For , some of the Nuns heard *F. Antonio* , after he had heard her *Confession* , speak to her , to intreat our Lord , not to take her so soon out of this life , that she might not so quickly leave hers. To whom the Mother answered , that she seemed no further needfull in this World ; and then began to utter many wholesome advices & directions to her Daughters ; which , though she never yet had omitted ; notwithstanding now , as near her End , she uttered them with greater ardency , and power , and clearer expressions of Love , than she was wont. The day before the festival of *S. Francis* , the Glorious Founder of the *Minors* , at five in the Evening , she asked for the most sacred *Viaticum* of our *Lords Body* ; her Body being so weak , and spent , that she could not stir herself in her Bed , nor turn from one side to another , but by the help of others. And , whilst the sacred Pledge of the dying was gone for , joining her hands together she bespake them in these words : *I beseech you my most deare Daughters , and Mistresses , in our Lord , to observe the laws , and constitutions of the Rule very exactly , and intirely : and likewise , I beseech you , regard not the ill example , which such a negligent Religious woman hath given you ; but , whatever I have herein offended , I desire you would forgive me it.* As soon as It came in sight , and that she beheld her *Lord* , whom she so passionately loved , approach within her Chamber-door ; though ; before , she was so exceedingly debilitated , and decayed in her health , and so oppressed with the pains of her disease , that she could not move out of her place , she with violence , none helping her , courageously got up , as though she would have leapt out of Bed , and must have bin held : her Face began to shine with an unusuall beauty , darting forth resplendent rayes , and looking after a far other manner than formerly it was wont , carrying a venerable kind of Majesty with it likewise , and seeming not of the same age , she was of , but much yonger. Then , like a milk-white Swan , upon the approaching end of her life , closing her hands , her Spirit filled with great devotion , and internal joy , she began with a more melodious voice than ever her last Song , and , in her Colloquies with her Sovereign Good , and Dearest Beloved , whom she now saw before her , she out of the abundance

bundance of her Soul uttered certain high , sweet , and amorous Expressions . Among the rest these : *O my Lord , and my Spouse , the desired Hour , I have so often wished for , is now come . Now is the time , that we may see each other . It is now time , Lord , to go ; and happy , and prosperous let it prove : thy Will be done . The Hour is come at last wherein I shall pass out of this Exile , and my Soul together with Thee enjoy that , which is hitherto exceedingly longed for .* Then she gave him infinite Thanks for begetting her in the Church , and permitting her to dy in it ; often reiterating these words ; *At length , Lord , I am a Daughter of the Church .* With great self-abasement likewise , and fense of devotion she begged of our Lord the pardon of her offences ; and said , by the merits of Jesus Christ she hoped for eternall Salvation ; intreating her Daughters to beg this of our Lord for her : then she humbly craved their pardon of all her faults . They , on the other side requesting the Mother to give them her last Commands , she would say no more , but bad them punctually observe the Injunctions of their Rule , and the decrees of the Constitutions , and ever perform sincere Obedience to their Superiors : a lesson ; which she often inculcated , and repeated to them . In this time she frequently reiterated these words of the Fiftieth Psalm , *Sacrificium Deo spiritu contributus . Cor contritum , & humiliatum Deus non despiciens . Ne proiecas me a facie tua ; & Spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me . Cor mundum crea in me Deus . A Sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit . A Contrite , and humble heart , O God , thou wilt not despise . Cast me not away from thy face ; and take not thy holy Spirit from me . Create in me a clear heart , O God .* But especially that half Verse , *Cor contritum , & humiliatum , Deus , non despiciens ,* was often in her mouth , till her Speech failed her .

After that she had desired the Sacrament of Extreme Unction , she with great reverence received it , at Nine a-clock at Night , on the same Vigil of S. Francis : then , the Nuns reciting the Psalms , according to the custome , she joined therein with them , and answere orderly at the end of the severall Prayers . When she had received this Sacrament , she from her heart rendred thanks to God , that he had made her a Daughter of the Church .

Then Antonio de J^su asked Her , whether , after her Death , her Body should be carried to Avila , or continue at Alva . Which Question , as far as could be gathered from her looks , displeased her ; wherupon she said , *Am I to have any thing my own ? Will they here deny me a little Earth for my Body ?* All that night she endured excessive pains , yet she omitted not the often reiterating those forementioned Verses of the Psalm .

Psalm. The next day at seven in the Morning she turned her self on one side just in the posture , and manner , as that holy Penitent the *B. Magdalene* is commonly drawn by *Painters* , holding a *Crucifix* in her hand , so fast , that she let not go , till the Nuns took it out of her hands , now ready to be interred . She retained an enflamed countenance as one , that , in great quiet , and composedness of Body , not so much as stirring in the least , were continually taken up with internall Contemplation . And when she now approached to the last period of her life , one of the *Nuns* viewing her more accurately thought she observed in her certain signs of our Saviour his talking to her , and shewing her strange things : for , the holy Mother discovered evident Marks of one wondering at the things she saw . Thus she continued till Nine in the Evening ; and that Thursday , being *S. Francis's day* , on the *Forth of October* , in the year 1582 . (in which was made a Correction of the *Calendar* , by taking from it the Ten days that remained over and above the account , so that the next Day after her Death was the *Fifteenth* of that Month) she surrendred her spirit to her *Creator* , *Pope Gregory XIII* . of Glorious Memory sitting at *Rome* in *S. Peters Chair* , and his *Catholick Majesty King Philip II.* reigning in *Spain* . Her Birth-day , fell on the 28. of *March* , 1515 . so that in all we reckon Her to have lived Sixty seven Years , Six Months , and Seven Days : She lived Fourty seven Years in Religion : wherof the first Twenty seven were spent in the *Monastery of the Incarnation* ; the Latter Twenty in the rigour of the first *Primitive Rule of the Carmelites* . Her End was so quiet , and gentle , that they , who had seen her often at her Prayers , would have thought her now intent upon the same Spirituall Exercise .

The Treatment of her Body after her Decease ; the manner of her Buriall ; and what happened before , and after her Death.

AS soon as this Holy Soul had forsaken the Body ; her Face looked most beautifull , without any wrinkles at all , whereas through age it had contracted many , whilst she lived ; and all her Body carried a strange Whiteness with it , not in the least wrinkled , so that you would say it was a smooth polished *Alabaster Statue* . Besides , her Flesh as pliant , and slick , as the flesh of a Child of two , or three years old . Here you might have seen in what *S. Bonaventure* her writes of *S. Francis* , that his Flesh looked as white as Snow , foreshewing already on Earth the Glory , which she was to possess in Heaven . Her limbs ,

limbs, when touched, were as limber, and flexible, as a Childs are, both for smoothnes, and softnes; carrying, I know not how, a kind of Beauty with them, as an evidence of her Innocence, and Sanctity. Her whole Body all over sent forth a most delicious Smell, which what aromaticall odour to resemble it to none could tell: whose sweetnes likewise with time increased, and grew at last so strong, that, because it made their heads ake, who were present, they were fain to open the Window, and temper it with the fresh aire. This befell in a lower Chamber of the Monastery (where now the *Nuns* use to meet every week to keep Chapter) yet the sent dispersed it self to the upper room, and for that night, and the day following was diffused over the whole house, extended also to the *B. Mother's* clothes, blankets, and all things used by her in her sickness. And this so strongly, that many days after a Sister smelling this sent in the Kitchin, and inquiring curiously whence it came, found at last a little Salt-celler in a Chest, having then some Salt in it, wherein remained the print of the *B. Mother's* fingers; when it was brought to her, in her sickness, and from thence this smell was perceived to come. It stuck to the Dishes likewise which she used, and the Water that washed her Corps, after she was dead, and, if in any corner, or among her clothes that she put off, any thing lay, that had touched her, it sent out the same fragrancy; by which those that smelt it might conjecture, that there was somthing privately kept there which she had heretofore made use of. The Person that put her Body into the ground, having after the performing that pious office, washed her hands, without reflecting thereon, began to smell such a sweetness coming from them, that she judged it to be celestiall, because she had never yet smelt the like on earth. Nor do I wonder so much, that there then began to exhale forth such delicious odours, since God was pleased to shew most apparent Signes of her Sanctity, when I consider, that, at times, her Daughters perceived the like Sent, as she lay sick in Bed. For, it appears, and that unquestionably, that a strange fragrancy issued often from her, somtimes whilst she was alienated from her Senses, somtimes when she had no such abstraction, and this both to Strangers, and to those of the Monastery. This a certain Matron of *Palentia*, at whose house *Teresa* once lodged, witnesseth: for, as oft as she came near her, she perceived this kind of Sent, and her little Son likewise approaching to take her Blessing, and smelling this sweetnes, said, in testimony of it, *Mother, how sweet this Saint's Hands smell!* And *Anna de S. Bartholomeo* herself, as oft as she either removed her, or appareled her in her last sickness, perceived this fragrancy, we speak of.

All that night, and to Ten in the Morning of the day following the Nunnis watched with the Corps, which for so many years had bin a Temple consecrated to the *Holy Ghost*, and the Compania and associate of that pious Soule, ever and anon devoutly kissing her feet, and hands. There lived at that time in the Monastery a Nun, who having lost her smell was exceeding sad, that she could not perceive that fragrancy, which the rest of her companions said, they smelt; whereupon kissing her feet devoutly, and reverently, she immediatly recovered her sense, and smelt that which the others did: and the sent remained in her Nose the space of many days after, as likewise in her Hands, and that so settled, that though she frequently washed them, it would not be got out.

Another Sister, troubled with an intollerable pain in her head, and one of her eyes, as soon as she kissed the feet of the B. Mother, recovered her health.

Another was ill of a great pain in her eyes, so that as she went about still she held her hand to them; for the violence of her distemper was such, that unless she pressed them with her hand, she could not walk. She had likewise for four years been afflicted with a continual Head-ach. Yet when she had applyed the Fingers of *Teresa* lately dead, to her eyes, and put her hands to her head, without using any other remedy, she felt her self cured of either malady.

The next Day her Corps being put into a Coffin, that was covered with Cloth of Gold (as she had seen it many years before, whilst she lay for some days as dead, without sense, and motion) was with the greatest decency, and in the handsomest manner, that Town could afford, buried in the hollow of a certain Arch of a Wall, which on the lower Quire-side is compassed in with Iron-bars, but is beheld also in the Church, that as well those without, as those within might enjoy the sight of it. Her Body dressed in her habit was put into a Coffin, which was overcharged with such a quantity of Stones, Mortar, and Bricks, that they broke into it, and together with them a great deal of Earth. This was done by the direction, and command of *Teresa de Layz* Founders of thi House, thinking by this means the more to secure, and settle upon thi place the possession of this sacred Pledge, and thereupon by no persuasions she could be brought to alter her mind herein.

Leave we now our *Teresa* at rest in her Grave a little, and enquire we here after the wonders that were done before, and about the time of her departure hence. For sometimes our Lord, when some of his more eminent Servants depart this life, hath used to shew beforehand certain signs, whereby both their former sanctity, and approaching glory may be understood.

Nood. Before, then that this Glorious Servant of God died, certain *Nuns* several times saw a great, and very bright Star hanging over the *Vestry*. Another, betwixt Eight and Nine in the Morning, not far from the Window of the Room in which the *B. Mother* afterward died, saw a certain Ray of the colour of Cristall suddenly darted in. And one at the same time perceived at the same Window of her Cell two other lightnings. That same Year likewise, sometimes as they sang *Martins*, or were at Prayer together, certain unusual flashes of light were discerned by the *Nuns* in the *Quire*. These sights were seen by all so frequently, and so general, that they said among themselves, that some extraordinary increase, or decay would befall the *Order*. And this Summer, before *Teresa* came to *Alva*, as some *Nuns* were together at Prayer, they heard a pleasing and friendly kind of gentle Sigh, as it were at a little distance from them; and the same day the *B. Mother* left this World, this very Groan was heard again; which brought to mind the former Groan, which they had heard at their Prayers. But omitting divers things of this sort, I will annex some more eminent.

A certain *Nun* of famed Sanctity, living now with God in Glory, but at that time having charge of the *Infirmary* of that House, as she was sitting at a low Window of the Room, where *Teresa* lay, which looked into the Monastery, heard a confused kind of Noise, as of a Multitude rejoicing, and full of mirth. Soon after a great number appear to her, passing through the Monastery glittering with a strange splendour, all in white; who, coming into the same Room rejoicing, so filled it with their Company, that though all the *Nuns* were there present, they were not seen: when they came neer to the Bed, where the *B. Mother* lay sick, immediatly she surrendred up her Soul to God. Whence may be very probably gathered, that they came in that last moment of her life, to accompany her Soul departing. At the time when she expired, one of the Sisters standing by, saw a little white Dove fly out at her Mouth; Her Spouse perhaps was there present, inviting her, and calling,
Surge, propera amica mea, columba mea, formosa mea, & *Cant. 2. 10.*
veni. Arise, make hast my love, my Dove, my fair one;
and come away. At the very instant of her Death also another Sister saw a great Light of a Cristalline kind of colour, not far from the Window of the same Room. Now I should easily perswade my self, that this great number all in white was a large Train of *Virgins*, who haply came down to conduct this so pure a *Virgin*, and the Mother of so many *Virgins* to the celestial glory; unless another thing discovered it self to me much more manifest: Concerning which the matter stands thus.

As Terefa one Year, with great sentiments of piety, and solemn preparation, suitable to the veneration, she bare to them, celebrated the anniversary of the *Ten Thousand Martyrs*; that vast multitude of Christian Champions by way of gratitude appeared to her, assuring her at the hour of her Death to accompany her to the Heavenly joys, and advance her to the same degree of Glory with themselves. It seems therefore to me very likely, that these very *Martyrs* were with her; as it is most certain, that the *B. Mother* had this Vision; as in the Fourth Book is more fully shewed. Now, what I have in this Chapter related both of the strange fragrance of her Body, and other Miracles, is an unquestioned truth, and for such I deliver it; for, the Body is yet to be seen with eyes, and touched with hands. As for the Miracles mentioned to have happened before her Death, I heard them from those, who saw the several Visions; Persons of great reputation, and religion, and who would witness, or affirm nothing, but what is true. Now, since some are true revelations, if any deserve credit, which more, than those, that fall out at such time, when one eminent for Sanctity is going out of this World? These tending directly to the manifestation of their Sanctity: neither doth the Devil use to favour the Servants of God, or by any signe attest their Sanctity at the time of their departure out of this life.

Ex Eodem. Lib. 5. Cap. 1, 2, 3.

*After some space of time the Body of the B. Mother
Teresa de Jesu is found intire, and translated
to the House of S. Joseph at Avila.*

I Have related after what sort the *B. Teresa's* Body (whereby, as by his Instrument, the *Holy Ghost* in her life-time wrought so many Miracles) was buried in the *Monastery* of the *Discalced* at *Alva*; in that very place, where, living, she by way of Prediction had foretold, of a certain Depositum, that was to be referred in that place: and the event following declared her meaning concerning her Body, which if it was whilst she lived, an Organ, wherewith God by his Handmaid was pleased to effect wonderful and renowned things, as we have

occas.

Occasionally shewn all the Book over, when dead, we shall find it prove no less.

The first Year therefore of the B. Mother's Interment, the Nuns out of devotion frequently visited the Body; and, if any through slothfulness fell asleep, she was wakened sometimes to attend to her Prayers by hearing a certain noise. Oft-times also a kind of sweet smell issued from it, though inclosed within a thick heap of Stones, and Morter. Besides this sweetnes was chiefly perceived on those Days, when the Festivals occurred of such Saints, whom Terefa, when living, was especially devoted to: though it came afterward to be almost daily, and constant. It was a sent, though very delicious, yet not always the same; for, sometimes it resembled the smell of Lilies, sometimes of Jasmin, and Violets; at other times you could not tell what to liken it to. Hereupon the Nuns had an extreme desire to look upon the Body; for, since it smelt so very sweet, that even strangers abroad perceived it, it seemed impossible to be rotten, or corrupted. Therefore, as soon as Jerom Gratian came to Alva, the Nuns gave him a full relation of what was done, desiring his leave to dig it up, and view it. The Father liking their motion, they began secretly to remove the Stones that covered it; which were so many, that in four Days time he with his companion could not carry them away all. And, some of the Stones by chance falling among the straw, that was in the place, a few days after one of the Nuns stuffing a Bed therewith for a Novice newly admitted into the Order, perceived the Straw to smell, when inquiring, and wondring at the reason, at length she found, the Floor had the same sweetnes from the Stones there casually thrown.

On the 4th. of July therefore 1583. they opened the Coffin, nine Months after her Death; which by reason of too much moisture was in the upper part of it corrupted, and broken, half-rotten, and covered with moss, yet smelling exceeding sweet; For, when the Bricks, and Stones were laid on it, there was cast in a great deal of Lime, the moisture of which reached to the very Body: The Clothes likewise were quite rotted away, and smelt dampish, and earthy: And the Body also was covered with the Earth, that came through the putrified, and mossy Coffin; yet was it self as perfect, and entire, as if it had been but lately buried. For, as our Lord kept it, when living, free, and untainted from any carnal filthines, in a most perfect Virginity; so, being dead, he preserved it from corruption, and putrefaction: not permitting the Worms to prey upon that, wherein unchast, and lascivious affections had taken no possession. Then was it stript of all its garments (for, when she was buried, she was dressed up in all her Clothes) the Body was washed, and cleansed;

from the Earth : And she sent issuing from it, and diffusing it self all the house over, was manifest, and wonderful, and perceived in every corner for several days. I received of some friends a little of this Earth ; which exhaled such a strange sweetnes, that none could tell what it was. Only one of our Fathers laid, it was like that, which came from a great Bone of the *Martyr S. Laurence*, which is kept in the *Colledge at Avila*. But the sent issuing from the Body was exceeding admirable, strong, and so altogether new, that never any smelt the like. Then was the Body new clad, and wrapt up in Linnen, laid in the same place, it was in before, and put into a *Coffin*, and so exposed to the view of all that come into the *Church*, the place where it lay being publick, and open. Yet, before it was coffin-ed up, *Father Provincial* took off the left Hand, which he carried afterward to *Lisbon*, to be kept in a Monastery of *Discalced Nuns*, founded there a little before. So, to the great joy of the *Nuns*, the holy Body continued here, being diligently kept, and looked to, and with much devotion at certain seasons visited. Not long after, in a *Provincial Chapter* at *Pasfrana*, the *Fathers Discalced* in the Year 1583. on *S. Luke's Day*, being the 18th. of *October* determined, that these *Sacred Relicks* were much better to be secretly removed, and translated from *Alva* to the Monastery of *S. Joseph at Avila*, where the *H. Mother* laid the first Foundations of this *Institute*, and where, when she died, she was actually *Priores*. That which principally induced them hereto was the devotion of *Alvarez Mendoza Bishop of Palenia*, who had promised to build the chief *Chappel* of that *Monastery*, and in the eminentest place thereof to erect a stately *Monument* for the *B. Mother*, and another for himself not far from it ; being so exceedingly affected toward her, that even in death he would not be parted from her. This matter was committed to *F. Gregory Nazianzen Vicar Provincial of Castile* ; and he was enjoyned to leave one Arme at *Alva* for the comfort of the *Nuns*. Letters also were added, signed the same day, about eight in the evening, empowering him to carry away the Body. What time likewise a thing wonderful, but true, happened at *Alva* ; which whoſo desires particularly to know may inform himself from the *Nuns of Alva*. Who, at that very Hour being in the place of their recreation, talking together of thoſe things, which they thought were to be debated in the *Congregation*, heard three ſeveral Knocks pretty loud, not far off them, and the lame afterward reiteratēd : which, they conjectured, were given by ſome Body at the turning wheel of the *Veftry*, who, being haply shut in unawares, desired to be let forth. A little while after the Door-keeper, looking very carefully, whether any one were left in the *Church*, heard three ſuch Knocks again, and told it

to the *Sisters*. Upon which the *Priores* bad them ; *Daughters*, let us not heed such things ; perhaps the Devil hath a mind to disturb our quiet. Afterward another of the *Nuns* affirmed, that she for certain heard the like Noise in the *Coffin*, which the Holy Corps was put into ; for, the Grave was not far from the Wheel, I mentioned, And she said true. Now, what this was, they then knew not ; till at last, acquainting *F. Gregory Nazianzen* with the whole business, they understood from him, that the Letters, which he brought with him, were sealed that very Hour : and thereupon they all concluded, the *B. Mother* being to remove did by that Signal, and warning bid her Daughters farewell. And so it fell out : for, the next November *Gregory* came to *Alva*, and on the Vigil of the Glorious Martyr *S. Katherine*, being the 25th. of November, the *Nuns* receiving a command to go into an upper Room to say their *Matins*, he with the *Superiores*, and two or three of the ancienter staying in the lower, having read his Letters to them, and opened his Commission from the Provincial Congregation, they with great privacy, and hast, take out the Sacred Pledge, which, though somewhat drier, and without blood, was then as entire, as before, and sent forth the same smell, that we spoke of. The Clothes were almost quite rotted. And at that time, in my opinion, two manifest Miracles were done, besides that eminent one, of that Virginal, and pure Body's being exempt from all corruption. The first is, that, whereas at her death *Teresa* bled so exceedingly, that it coloured the new white Woollen Garment, they had put on her, the very same Blood three Years and two Month^s after sinelt notwithstanding freih, and odoriferous : and, when a piece of this Garment was put into a Linnen Cloth, that also grew by lit le and little red, and died with the colour of blood. I saw a piece of this Cloth, and many more besides all died after the same manner by it, (though without partaking of the moisture) ; when-as nothing was done to them, but oniy the one for a Day was applied to the other ; And indeed it seems miraculos that so excellent a Smell should be obserued in this Blood. The other ; that whereas, after they had taken the Body out of the *Coffin*, *F. Gregory Nazianzen*, sufficiantly unwilling thereto (for, as he afterward told me, he thought, he never in all his life in any thing more perfectly sacrificed his own Will to God) for executing his Superior's command, drew a Knise, that he had hanging at his Girdle, to cut off her Arm, which he was to leave at *Alva*, and had entred it already in her left Arm, (being that, which was put out of joint, when the Devil threw her down the Stairs of the Service-room) which had the Hand taken away from it before, he with very great ease, without putting force to it, as if he had been slicing a *Melon*, or

new

new Cheese (as himself affirmed) cut it down from the Shoulder-joint as readily, as if he had tried it often before. Thus was the Arm severed from the Body: Then, taking the Body, and wrapping it in a Linnen Cloth, immediately he conveyed it to the Gate. But, the odiferous Sent diffusing it self, and being smelt by the *Nuns*, then in the Service-room, they began, not amiss, to suspect, that the *sacred pledge* below was taken away from them; and thereupon following the sent, they hasten to the Gate. When, *Gregory* being gone, and the Gate of the House shut, they return back sad, having now only an Arm, and a piece of bloodied Cloth, whereas they had hitherto possessed the whole Body entire. Presently *Gregory*, conceiving delays unseasonable, departed that Night for *Avila*, lest, if the business came to be discovered, the Townsmen of *Alva* should make an insurrection. At *Avila* the sacred Pledge was joyfully, and acceptably entertained, and honourably disposed in a place, where all the *Nuns*, at pleasure, might see it, and delight themselves. It was first laid in the *Chapier-room* on a Biere with Curtains hung about it. Afterward a longer Coffin in fashion of a Tomb was provided, which they covered with violet-coloured Silk, and drew Cords about it made of Silk and Silver; and on the out-side it was covered over with a black *Velvet* fringed with a Lace of Silk and Gold. Besides; the Nails, Locks, and Keyes of the Coffin, as likewise the Hinges, were all gilt: two *Escutcheons* also of Gold, and Silver, hung up; in one of which were the *Armes* of the *Order*, in the other the most holy *Name of Jesus* written: and upon the *Monument* in Cloth of Gold was this *Inscription* embroidered, *Mother Teresa of Jesus*. This Tomb I my self afterward saw; which though it then retained not the Body, yet it kept the Smell.

*The Miracle of the Holy Body begins to be divulged
among the People; and it is brought back to Alva.*

Both the *Fathers*, and the *Nuns* were exceeding vigilant, that no rumour about the integrity of the Body, or the removing it to *Avila* might spread among the common People: this course at first was best liked of; but afterward some, that were acquainted with the business, thought it better, to call together some *Physicians*, and *Divines*, who, viewing it more curiously, might see, whether this entireness were possible from a natural power, or whether it were to be attributed to a supernatural, and miraculous; that what these determined, might

might be accordingly registered. For which cause also they desired *Maria de S. Hieronymo*, *Priores* of this House, that the whole proceedings of the matter might be drawn up into a Narrative. Though she was not minded to publish any thing of it till she had gotten leave from her Superior the *Provincial*. He was so far from disliking this diligence, that immediately he sent his Letters granting full power, which at length arrived on the day before the *Calends of January* of the Year following, about evening. But, in regard our Lord was pleased to have this dispatched without delay, and his wondrous works published, there came to *Avila* at that very hour *Fr. Didacus de Yepes*, at that time Governor of those of *S. Hierom's Order* at *Madrid*, * and * Afterward likewise *Licentiate Laguna*, *Privy Counsellor* to the King, *Bishop of Tarazona*, who, after *Ribera* wrote *S. Teresa's life*; also *Francis Contreras*, now *Affessor of the Parliament of Granada*; who all with much pains in sharp weather forbore not to travel from *Madrid* to *Avila*, meerly to see this Miracle. They alighted at the *Palace of Peter Fernandez Teminus the Bishop*, relating to him, what a Treasure lay hid in his City. He, understanding the whole business by his Treasurer *John Carrillio*, who was already acquainted with the particulars, certifies the Governors of the House by a Messenger, that he with the *Affessors of the Kings Court*, would be there next Day at Nine of the Clock. So, when next Day came, being the first of *January 1586*, beginning the new Year, at nine, the hour appointed, the *Bishop*, with the *Counsellors*, and two *Physicians*, and others, to the number of Twenty, were present. *Didacus de Yepes*, and *Julian de Avila Priest*, with two *Physicians*, going into the Monastery, fetched out the holy Body, and laying it on a Carpet (having first carefully shut the Door) well-nigh all of them carrying Lights in their hands, they uncovered it; and the *Bishop*, and his Attendants all bare-headed, and kneeling down, not without admiration, and many tears, exactly viewed it.

Then the *Physicians* curiously observing all particulars affirmed, that there was nothing natural, but that this integrity was argument sufficient of a Divine power; as they depos'd, when they returned to the *Bishop* at evening, alledging several reasons for confirmation thereof. But, the thing was so manifest, and clear, that there needed not many words. For, who could deny, that, for a body, never opened, nor embalmed, whereto no *Scarf cloth*, or aromatick Liquors had been applied, to continue incorrupt, and unblemished after three Years, and three Months, so, as to want no whole part, and to send forth so strange, and odoriferous a Smell, was a work of the right hand of the Almighty, and transeending all natural

strength? And they wondred no less, upon seeing the Linnen-cloth died wvith the blood so fresh, and odoriferous. The *Bishop* then turning to the *Nuns* said, the Treasure, their House was possessed of, was a right precious one indeed, so that they seemed to need no more in this World. Enjoining them likewise to use it decently, and reverently, as was fit, and not put the Carpet, whereon the *Sacred Relique* was laid, to common uses thence-forward. Then, on pain of *Excommunication*, he forbade any to divulge what was seen: but they could not be silent; ever and anon saying, *Oh, what wondrous, and stupendious things have we seen!* and they were inflamed with such an ardour to discover the thing, that, the *Bishop* being forced to abrogate his censure of *Excommunication*, the whole Town came to know it.

These things stood at *Avila*; but had not at *Alva* the like success. For, when the holy *Reliques* were taken thence, *Antonio de Toledo* the *Duke* was not yet returned from *Navarr*, and *Ferdinand de Tolido*, his *Uncle*, *Prior* of *S. Johns*, vvas absent too; who, upon understanding the business, grew extreme angry, and displeased, both because he was exceedingly devoted to the *B. Mother*, and because he saw, how precious a Jewel his City had lost: for, he esteemeed the injury done not so much to the *Duke*, as to himself, to whom the *Duke* in his absence had committed all the care of his *Dukedom*. Not long after, coming to the Monastery wvith a publick *Notary*, he under a severe, and heavy penalty, enjoined the *Prioress*, and *Nuns*, by no means to deliver to any the Arm of the *B. Mother* that was remaining among them, without his command. Nor staid his care here; but, being solicitous for the Body too, he dispatched Letters to *Rome* to the *Pope*, so effectual, that he commanded the *Fathers Discalced* to return the holy *Reliques*, as soon as might be to *Alva*, and restore them to the *Prioress*, and the *House* at *Alva*; and, if they had any thing to say to the contrary, that they shoulde either themselves, or by their *Procurator*, plead their cause before Himself.

No sooner had *Father Nicolas de Jesu Maria*, at that time *Provincial*, received, and heard his *Holinesse's* command, but immediatly he went to *Avila*, and took order, that the *Body* should be privatly conveyed to *Alva*, attended on by *F. John Baptist Prior* of *Pastrana*: Who together with *F. Nicolas de Sto. Cyriko Prior* of the *Covent* at *Manzera*, bringing the sacred *Reliques* with them, came to *Alva* on the *Vigil* of *S. Bartholomew* 1586. But, they were conveyed so secretly, that none could know, what was brought in; and about eight in the morning they restored them to the *Monastery*. These had not been long in the *House*

at *Alva*, but I went on the same occasion to *Avila*, to view the holy Body ; for, I had an extreme desire to see it ; and, had I came a little sooner, I had found it before the Gate, and so satisfied my wish. As soon as it was noised in the Town, the Towns-People, and Clergy began to shew their joy by a solemn *Procession*, and consorts of Musick. But the *Provincial*, because he did but deposite the sacred Corps there, in obedience to the *Popes* commands, as a *Lone*, for a time, not to continue there constantly, forbade any pomp to be used ; appointing only that it should be delivered to the *Nuns*, and witness be taken of delivering it. So, *John Baptist* carefully pursuing the commands received from his Superior, varied not a jot from his Order. Then was the *Venerable Pledge* placed in the lower *Quire*, and, the *Duke* with his *Mother*, the *Countess* of *Lerin*, being at the *Grate*, shewn to a great number of People gathered together in the *Church*, set about with lighted Tapers. When, the *Prior* of *Pastrana* asking the *Nuns*, whether they knew it to be indeed the true Body of the *B. Mother Teresa de Jesu*, and were sure, that this, which was delivered to them, was it, they all with one voice answered, it was ; as also did another company of *Citizens*, who had taken up all the places in the fore-part of the *Church*. In witness of all which he commanded *Records* to be drawn up by a publick *Notary*. And it was but fit, that the throng of the *Citizens* should be kept without the *Grates* ; for, there resorted such a multitude, all with such an eagerness, such a desire of seeing, and the Persons so violently bent upon it, that, had the holy Reliques been publickly exposed in the fore-part of the *Church*, the People transported with devotion would not have forborn cutting off pieces of the Garments, and even of the *Body* too. But, all the afternoon there flocked such crowds one after another to see the *Miracle*, that they could neither keep them out, nor could we, that were in the inner part in the *Chancel*, get out, till late at night : the People were so insatiably desirous of seeing it.

Then the Towns-men, and Magistrates, suspecting that the *Fathers* vwould not finally leave these sacred *Reliques* at *Alva*, kept vwatch and vvard, lest any might take them away from thence : yea, they by publick authority requested the *Nuns* to permit none to carry them away, being over-joyed at their having regained the sacred *Pledge*. Of all which I am an eye-witness, vwho being vwithin the *Grates* viewed it my self as I pleased, and afterward, though this without any stay got to kis her Feet : for, though the evening drew on, and the

Church-doores vvere shut, yet vve could not get out, for the strangers. I vwill mention here another passage no less strange; as happening in, and concerning my self. The very same evening that those *Discalced Fathers*, vwho had brought the *B. Teresa's Body* to *Alva*, novv ready to be gone, repaired to their Inn, (vvhich vvas the same, that I vvith my Companion aftervvard came to) to refresh themselves a little; the Garment that had been put upon the Body, vvas brought to them, to be carried back with them to *Avila*, because the *Nuns* of *Alva* had provided her another: and it vvas brought folded up, and so vvrapt in a Blanket, that notwithstanding part of it appeared without. I, going nigh to it, to do it reverence, perceived a very siveet Smell come from it; the Garment continued in this place about three Quarters of an Hour. When the *Fathers* were gone, I went to the Room, in which they had been, which retained such a fragrancy in that little space, as I said, wherein that Garment remained there, that I presently perceived it, and plainly knew it. Not long after my Companion coming in, I asked him, whether he smelt any thing, he answered, Yes; for, it was impossible but he must smell it. And, lying in the Room that Night, as oft as I waked, I perceived this Sent manifestly in my Nose.

From that time to this present the Saered Body hath remained at *Alva* with the Arme, though there it be very seldom permitted to be seen. For, the *Discalced Nuns*, and whole Corporation of *Avila* contending, and urging to have the holy *Reliques* carried back to *Avila*; *Antonio de Toledo Duke of Alva*, and *Constable of Navarr*, and likewise *Ferdinand de Toledo Prior of S. Johns*, desirous partly for their own, partly for the Monastery, and Town of *Alva*'s sake, that it should remain at *Alva*, referred the matter to *Sixtus Quintus the Pope*: by whose authority *Casar Specianus Bishop of Novaria, Apostolical Nuncio*, being constituted Judge, in the Year 1588, in December gave Sentence, that the *B. Teresa's Body* should reside constantly at *Alva*. From this Decree when Appeal was afterward made to the *Pope* himself, he on the Tenth of July following ratified it with all possible, and necessary authority, and weight of words, as firm, as could be desired. So, it was laid in a magnificent, and stately *Tomb*, which the *Prior of S. Johns*, (the chief, and only cause of settling the Body in *Alva*) promised to provide for it.

I will not here pass by, how, before the Body was carried back to *Alva*, our Lord himself from Heaven fore-shewed it. For, a Month before

before its return, in that very place, wherein afterward it was laid, and lies at this day, a certain *Nun*, being in Prayer, in the upper *Quire*, saw a very bright Star; the lustre of which was such, as that the other Stars compared with it seemed dark, and obscure. Afterward in the lower *Quire* she saw a very clear light, that had an incomparable, and admirable beauty. Whence she, not improbably, guessed, that this House would enjoy some eminent happiness; who, after the Body was restored again, perceived then, that This by those Miracles had been fore-shewn.

*A Description in what State the Body, and Arme
are at present.*

THose who shall have read this, probably, will desire to know much more particularly in what condition the *Body* at present is: which I shall here willingly describe to them, having viewed it more curiously, and exactly, to be able (as I now purpose) to make an entire, and compleat Narration thereof. I will begin with the *Arme*, which I have often felt: Next, I will describe the *Body* it self.

The *Arme*, from the *Vertebra* of the Shoulder, is perfectly entire, save that it wants the *Hand*, which, as I said before, was carried to *Lisbon*. It is (being that, which by falling down Stairs once was disjoined, and broken; and also by cutting off the *Hand*, some Vigour, and Vital Vertue being gone out of it) less fleshy, than that, which is still joined to the *Body*: yet hath it flesh enough, though it had more formerly; for, it is now somewhat dried. It is just of the colour of *Dates*; the Flesh of it like flesh powdered, and dried; the Skin all along wrinkled, as it useth to be in those, who, formerly fat, grow afterward lean. Yet it continues entire still, covered over with its own down, which I have often seen, and felt. It is kept by the *Nuns* always wrapt up in a clean Cloth, which by degrees is moistened with a certain unctuousness, or Oile coming from it, and anon, rendering it so unctuous, as if it had been dip'd in Oile, or some such

Na 3

Liquor,

Liquor; and the Liquor hath the same odiferous smell, that the *Arm* and *Body* have. Several Clothes have been died with it; and given to several Persons, as certain sacred Reliques; and are so still, though this moisture come not away in such quantity, as formerly; because the Flesh is extenuated every day more and more. Besides no putrefaction can ever totally wast this flesh, as though it were of Brass, or Steel. For, the least piece of flesh, though but half the thicknes of ones Nail, even in the greatest heat of Summer, though worn about ones Neck, or in ones Bosome, or any other place extreme hot, never loseth its smell, if well wrapt up. And this is most certain, being found true by constant use, and daily experience. Insomuch as that he that hath a great, or a small piece of the *B. Mother Teresa's* flesh, as to its lasting, and incorruption, may be confident, he hath that, which is as solid, as any hard Bone of some other Saint. When I first took that *Arme* into my hands it was one forenoon; and the same Sent stuck to them, that comes from the flesh; which pleased me so, that being to go to Dinner, I would not wash, that they might not in the washing lose that sweetnes. But this fear was needless: for even washed they retained the same still; nay, at night after I was in Bed, my Hands kept that smell. Besides, at this time I was seized with such an unwonted fervour of devotion, that I both then plainly and manifestly perceived it, and it also continued with me for a Fortnight.

The *Body* it self I saw at leisure the 25th. of *March*, the day of the *Annunciation* of the *Mether of God*, and the *Incarnation* of our *Lord Christ*, in the Year 1588. which because I viewed more accurately, as resolving to give a Testimony of it (which I here do) I am able to describe exactly, and make particular relation of it. It is (then) upright, and extended at length, though a little inclining forward, and bending, as the posture of decrepit Persons useth to be; but by it one may easily gather that she was notwithstanding tall of Stature. Withall, so solid, and consistent, that, by putting one Hand under the *Arm-pits*, it is able to stand on its Feet, and may be dressed, or undressed, as if living. It is of a Date-colour, as is the *Arm*, I spoke of, yet in some places a little more inclining to white. No part of it is yellower than the Face; for, being always covered with a Veile, and sullied by gathering much dust, it fared worse, and harder than other parts of the *Body*. Yet it continues entire, and not so much as the tip of the Nose is broken, or impaired; nor one Hair shed off her Head, but the very same, as formerly, when first buried. The Eyes

are dried ; the humour, they had, being wasted ; yet they are entire, and unblenished. The Warts which were on her Face, as we said, are perfect, and unaltered together with their Hairs on them. The Mouth is so close shut, that it can by no means be opened. The Body is fleshy, and full of Muscles, especially about the shoulders.

Out of that part, which the Arm is cut off from, there distils a viscous, and tenacious Moisture, which sticks to ones hand, if touched, and sends forth the same Smell, as the rest of the Body. The Hand is well-shaped, in the manner of one blessing, but hath not all its Fingers : those that cut them off I do not commend ; for, that Hand, that did such wonderful works, and which God was pleased to have continue entire, I should judge it a crime to mutilate. The Feet are neat, and keep in their just proportion. In fine, the whole Body is fleshy, and brawny. The Sent it breathes forth is the same with that, which comes from the Arm, though much stronger. Indeed I took such delight by the fuller discovery of this hidden Treasure, that I think it the joyfullest day, I ever had in all my life, and my Eyes could never be satisfied with looking on it. Yet I cannot but lament, and expostulate too, out of my fear, lest in time to come, either by great Persons intreaty, or at the importunate requests of some *Monasteries*, it may be divided into pieces. Which, in my judgment, it should not, but remain wholly in the same condition, as God was pleased to leave it in ; Since it is a most ample Testimony of the Divine Greatness, and likewise an evident argument of the Virginal integrity of the B. Mother Teresa, and of her admirable Sanctity. And whoever shall either request, or grant this, are not really, in my opinion, to be accounted her true Children.

Thus Ribera, in his Fifth Book, and Third Chapter. After which he proceeds to relate many Miracles done by her Sacred Reliques, Garments, unctuous Linnen-clothes, and the like : which I refer the pious Reader to view at his leisure in the Author,

E I N I S.

THE
MANNER of VISITING
THE
MONASTERIES
OF
DISCALCED NUNS.



Printed in the Year, MDCLXIX.

MANNE'S
MANNER OF VISITING
AND
DISCOURSES
ON
VISITING



Printed in the Year, MDCCLXIX.

*A Brief Discourse, wherein the Fathers Provincial and
Visitors are directed how in their Visitations to proceed
with their Subjects; who are commanded likewise how
to carry themselves toward their Superiors, and to-
ward one another, with the greater Spiritual ad-
vantage.*

First, I confess the Imperfection, I have shewed in my beginning this Tract, as to what concerns *Obedience*; a Virtue, I more desire, than any thing in the World. The undertaking, It hath been a very great Mortification to me, and I have used great reluctance; our *Lord* grant, I may succeed in something, I say; since I trust only in his Mercy, and in the humility of him, who hath commanded me to write it; that for this, *God* will do the work, as powerfull, and not regard me.

Though it seems not convenient to begin with the Temporal, yet so it hath seemed to me; that, for the Spiritual improvement, it imports much (though in *Monasteries* of Poverty it seems otherwise, but yet in all it is of concernment) to keep good order, and take an account of the managing of every thing. Prelupposing first, that it becomes a *Superior* principally so to demean himself toward these his Subjects, that, though, on the one side he be affable, and discover a love to them, yet on the other he let them know, that in substantial matters he is to be rigorous, and inflexible. I do not conceive, any thing in the World doth a *Superior* so much mischief, as the not being feared; and, for his Subjects to think to treat with him, as their fellow; and *Womens* especially: for, if once they perceive in the *Superior* such a flexibility, as to pass by their faults, and change his mind, lest they grow discontented, it will be very difficult to govern them.

It is extreme necessary, they should understand there is a Head, who will shew no favour in any thing that may prove a diminution of *Religious Discipline*; and that the *Judge* is so strict in administering Justice, that let them be confident, he will not swerve from what tends most to *Gods service*, and greater Perfection, though the World sink; and will be affable, and kind to them, as far as he perceives them not deficient herein. For, as it is necessary to shew himself mild, and like a Father, loving toward them (which conduceth much to their consolation, and to the end

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they be not alienated from him) so is this other necessary too. And, when one must faile in one of these two, it is a less ill without comparison to faile in the latter, the being very gentle, and kind; than in the former, the being strict, and impartial. For, the *Visitations* being but once a Year, in going about with love to correct, and make them leave their faults, by a little and little, except the *Nuns* understand, that, at the Years end, those, they have committed, are to be amended, and punished; a Year, or two will run out, and *Religious Discipline* come to be relaxed: so that when they would remedy it, they cannot. And, though the fault should be only the *Prioreffe's*, the *Nuns* being once used to a relaxation, should they put in another *Prioreff*; yet Custome in our Nature is a terrible thing: and by little and little, and in small matters, they come to bring irremediable mischief on the *Order*. And the *Superior*, who in time remedies it not, shall render a dreadful account thereof to *God*.

I seem to do an injury to these *Monasteries* of the *Virgin our Lady*, in treating of such things as these; since, through the goodness of our *Lord*, they are now so far from needing this Severity: but fearing that relaxation, Time is wont to make in *Monasteries*, by not attending those Beginnings, I am forced to say this; and although it is seen, that every day, through Gods Mercy, they go on improving, yet in some of them perhaps some breach had happened, if the *Superiors* had not done what I am speaking of; that is, proceed with this rigour in redressing petty matters, and discharging the *Superoresses*, they perceived unfit for this purpose. In this particularly it is necessary to shew no pity: for, many that are very holy will not be fit *Superoresses*; and it must be remedied speedily; since, where is practised so great Mortification, and the exercises of Humility, she will not take it for an injury: and, if she do, it is evident, she is not fit for the Office: inasmuch as she ought not to govern Souls so much practising Perfection, who hath so little thereof, as to desire to be *Superoress*.

He that is to visit therefore had need to set before him *God*, and the service, he doth these Houses, that they be not impaired by his means; and let him reject certain Compassions, which most commonly the Devil raiseth from some great mischief, and which are the highest cruelty, he can use toward his Subjects.

It is impossible, all those, who shall be chosen *Superoresses*, should have Talents for such an Office; which when discovered, in no wise let the first Year expire without displacing her. For, in one Year she may do much harm; and, in three, may ruine the *Monastery*, by making a Custome.

Custome of her Imperfections : and the doing this is so very important, that, though the *Superior* be very averse, as coaceiving her a Saint, and not having a wrong intention, yet let him force himself so far, as not to leave her in the *Office*. This I request him for the love of our *Lord*. And, when he perceives, that these who are to elect, proceed with any partiality and passion (which *God* forbid) let him null the Election, and nominate a *Prioress* out of other *Monastryes*, wishing them to chuse her : for, of an Election made after such sort, never can good issue come. I know not, whether this, I have said, be *Temporal*, or *Spiritual*.

That, which I would begin to say is, that the Books of Expence be looked into with great care, and diligence, and let not this be passed lightly by : in * the *Houses* that have Rents especially, it is very requisite, that the expence be ordered with proportion to the Income, though they shift as they can ; since, *God* be praised, all, that have Revenue, enjoy sufficient : and, if they spend with moderation, they may live very well ; otherwise, by little and little, if they begin to be in Debt, they will go to ruine : for, being in great want, the *Superiors* will think it inhumanity, not to allow themselves their own labours, and let their kindred provide for each of them ; and the like, as the custome now is in other places ; whereas I had rather without comparison see a *Monastry* dissolved, than reduced to this state : and for this it is, that I said, that from the *Temporal* great inconveniences are wont to come upon the *Spiritual*. This therefore is of much importance.

In *Houses* of *Poverty* he must be extreme vigilant, and careful that they do not contract Debts : for, if they have faith, and serve *God*, they shall not want, since they spend not excessively. In both the one, and the other he must know particularly the *Diet*, that is given the *Nuns* ; and how they treat the *Sick*, looking that they be supplied with sufficient necessaries ; for, this our *Lord* never fails to give ; provided, there be in the *Superior's* Courage, and Diligence. This is already seen by experience.

He must observe both in the one, and the other, the work that is done : and likewise to compute the Gains of their Handiwork is beneficial for two things. One is, to animate, and thank them for what they have done. The other, that, in the *Houses* where there is not so much care taken of working, because they have not so much need, they may be told, what the *Nuns* get in other places ; for, this taking account of their labour, besides the temporal benefit, is every way very profitable : and it is a consolation to them when they work, to understand, that the

Superior is to see it; because, though this be not a matter of importance, they are to bear with Women of such strict *Clausure*, and whose whole content lies in pleasing the *Superior*, condescending sometimes in this kind to our weakness. He is to inform himself, whether there be any extraordinary entertainments; this is especially needful in Houses endowed, which are able to do more in this particular, and thus *Monasteries* come to be ruined by things which seem of small importance. If the *Superviores* happen to be expensive, they may leave the *Nuns* delitiae of Victuals, by over-liberal giving, as is seen in some places. And therefore it is necessary to consider, what may be done proportionably to the Revenue, and the Alms that may be given, and in every thing to put a limit, and measure.

He must not permit enlargements of their Houses; and that, for the curious Workmanship and Vanity therein, they run in Debt, except on urgent necessity; and therefore it were requisite to enjoin, that no Work be undertaken without giving the *Superior* notice, and an account what there is to do it with, that he may, according to the Stock, grant, or deny, leave. This is not meant of a small matter, which can cause no great harm; but that it were better to bear the incommodity of a house not very good, than be disturbed, give scandal, run in Debt, and want Victuals.

It imports much that there be an Inspection made into the whole House, to see what *Clausure*, and *Recollection* there is; for, it is good to remove the occasions, and not trust the sanctity that appears now, how much soever it be, because none knows what it will be. And so it is necessary to forecast all the ill that may follow, to remove (as I said) the occasion; and especially, that the *Locutories* have two *Grates*, one on the out-side, another on the in-side, and that through neither of them one can put their hand. This imports much; as also to look that the *Confessionals* have the Curtains nailed; and that the *Window* from Communicating be little: that the *Gate* have two Bolts, and that of the *Cloister* two Keyes, as the *Constitutions* enjoin; one let the *Porter* keep, the other the *Priests*. I see the practice already is so; but, lest it should be forgotten, I insert it here; for, they are things, which must ever be looked to, and let the *Nuns* see they have an eye to it, that there be no neglect therein.

It concerns Him much to inform himself concerning the *Confessors*, and likewise the *Chaplain*; and that there be not much communication, save about necessities; and to enquire very particularly hereof from the *Nuns*, and of the *Recollection* of the House. And, if any one be tempted,

tempted, to hear her very patiently ; for, though many times that, which is not true, will seem so to her, and she will aggravate it, he may take notice of her information, so to learn the truth from the rest, laying his commands upon such Persons, and reprehend them afterward with severity, that they may be afraid, and do so no more. And, when, without the *Priores*'s fault, any shall pry into small matters, or relate things with exaggeration, they must be dealt with rigorously, and made to understand their blindness, that they be no further troublesome ; for, when they see, they gain nothing thereby, but that they are discovered, they will be desist. For, being not matters of importance, they are always to favour the *Superiores* therein, thought faults must be remedied ; for, the simplicity of perfect Obedience would be a great step toward the quiet of Inferiors. For, the Devil might tempt some, in imagining, they understand a thing better than the *Superiores*, and so going on to observe things that import little, whereby they may do much harm. These things the *Superior*'s discretion will easily understand, thereby to effect in them some improvement ; though, if they be Melancholick, he will have much ado. To such no gentleness is to be shewn ; for, if they think they shall speed in any one thing, they will never cease to be troublesome, nor desist : but let them always know, they are to be punished, and, for this reason, the *Superior* is to be countenanced.

If haply any one desire, they would remove her to another *Monastry*, she must be answered so, as that neither she, nor any other may ever conceive it a thing possible. For, none (unless having seen it by experience) can imagine the monstrous inconveniences therein, and what a Gate is opened to the Devil for Temptations, if once they think it possible to get out of the House, upon the urgent occasions, which, to this purpose, they would alledge. And, though it be to be allowed, they must not understand it to be so upon their desiring it, but other pretences must be found ; for, she will never settle any where, and will do much harm to the rest : but let them know, that the *Nun*, which shall desire to remove from her House, shall never gain credit with the *Superior* in any matter ; and, though he had meant to have taken her abroad ; taken her abroad, I say, for some necessity, or some *Foundation*, yet that for that very reason he would not do it. And it is good to do thus ; for, these temptations never assault any, but Melancholick Persons, or those of such a temper, as are not fit for doing much service : and perhaps it would do well, before any one treat of such a matter, for the *Superior* to make some discourse thereof, how ill a thing it is, and how bad an opinion he should have of any one that lay under this kind of Tem-

Temptation, mentioning the reasons; and how that now none any more may go forth; though hitherto there were occasions, that made it necessary so to employ them.

Let him enquire, whether the *Priores* hold particular friendship with any, doing more for her, than for the rest; for otherwise it is not to be heeded, unless it prove very immoderate: because the *Priores* have need of conversing more with those, that are of better understanding, and more discreet. And, since our nature suffers us not to account ourselves what indeed we are, every one thinks her self as good as others: and by this means the Devil may put this Temptation into the minds of some; For that, where there are no great matters from occasions abroad, he goes finding out some small things at home, that there may be always a War, and merit in resisting him: and so they will be imagining that such or such a Person, or Persons govern the *Priores*. Therefore, if there be any excess [of familiarity] it must be moderated; For it is a great temptation to the weak; but not therefore altogether to be forbore; because, as I said, they may be such Persons, as this may be necessary: yet it is always good, to take special care of not having much intimacy with any. And it may soon be known, how the matter goes.

There are some so out of measure perfect, to their thinking, that all they see, seems to them a defect: and these are ever they, that have most defects, and discern them not in themselves; but lay all the fault upon the poor *Priores*, and others: and so may deceive the *Superior*, in his desiring to remedy that which is fit to be done; and therefore, for a sufficient ground to amend any thing, it is necessary, not to credit one alone, but to enquire of more. For, where so much rigour is practised, it would be a thing intolerable, if every *Superior*, at every *Visitation*, should still make new Orders: so that, unless it be in important matters, and (as I said) upon good information from the same *Priores*, and others, concerning what is to be amended, and the cause, and manner how it is done, they are not to leave severe Injunctions: for, they may impose so much, that, unable to bear it, the main scope of the *Rule* may be neglected. That, wherein the *Superior* is to be especially careful, is, that the *Constitutions* be observed: and, where there shall be a *Priores*, that takes the liberty to break them for a small cause, or makes a custome thereof, thinking thus thin, or that to import little, let it be held for certain, that she will do great harm to the House; which Time will evidence, though, presently, it appear not. And this is the reason, why some *Mysteries*, and also *Orders* too are so decayed in some places, by little regarding small faults; whereby they come to fall likewise into their greatest.

Let

Let him frequently admonish all in publick, to declare, when there is a failing herein in the *Monastery*; for that, if he come to know it, he will very severely punish her, who shall not acquaint him. This will make the *Prioreſſes* fear, and proceed with caution. It is necessary not to comply with them, whether they find it displeasing, or not; but let them know, that thus it must ever go; and that the chief reason of putting her in the Office is, to enforce the keeping of the *Rule*, and *Conſtitutions*, and not of her own head to expunge, or add; and that there is to be one that observes her, and informs the *Visitor* concerning her.

I hold it impossible for the *Prioreſſ* to discharge her Office, that doth any thing, which she dislikes the *Visitor* should fee; for, it is a ſigne, that that is not very juſtifiable in the ſervice of *God*, which I would not have him to know, who is in his stead. So also the *Superior* is diligently to obſerve, if there be plainneſſ, and truth in the things that are treated with him; and, if not, let him reprehend it with great severity, and procure it for here-after; diſpoſing, as is fit, in order thereto the *Prioreſſes*, and those in office, and uſing other diligences. For, though they do not lye, ſome things may be concealed; and there is no reaſon, that, being the Head by whose direction they are to live, He ſhould be debarred from knowing all. Since hardly can the Body do any good without the Head; and it is no leſs, if they conceal, that from him, which he is to amend. I conclude with this; that, ſo the *Conſtitutions* be obſerved, all will go plain: and, if there be not great caution in this, and in keeping of the *Rules*, *Viſitations* will profit little, which are appointed chiefly for this end, unleſs it be in their changing the *Prioreſſes*, and even the *Nuns* too, (if there be a cuſtome already contracted) to introduce others, who may be exact in the Discipline of the *Order* (which is juſt as if the Houſe were begun anew): and ſo to put every one of them apart in another *Monastery*, diſperſing them, ſince one or two can do little hurt in a well-ordered Houſe.

It is to be noted, that there may be found a *Prioreſſ*, who will desire a liberty for ſome things, that are againſt the *Conſtitutions*, and perhaps will alledge arguments to her thinking ſufficient, because ſhe understands no better, or (which *God* forbiid) would fain perſwade the *Superior* of their conveniency. And, though they be not [directly] againſt the *Conſtitutions*, they may be ſecretly, ſo that it may prove prejudicial to admit them; for, he, being not preſent, knows not what may be; and we know how to aggrate what we deſire. Therefore, poſſibly, it were beſt not to open a Gate for any thing to enter at, except it accord with the preſent ſtate of things, ſince it is evident how well they proſper;

and manifest by experience, that what is certain excels what is doubtful. And in such cases the *Superior* must be resolute, and not stick to say Nay ; but with that freedom, and holy dominion, I speake of at the beginning, not to heed the pleasing, more than displeasing the *Prioreffes*, or *Nuns*, as to that, which in time may breed some inconvenience : its Novelty is sufficient prejudice to its Beginning.

In granting Licences for receiving of *Nuns*, it concerns very much, that the *Superior* grant it not, till due information be made to him. And, if he be in a place where he can enquire, let him do it himself. For, there may be *Prioreffes* so desirous of admitting *Nuns*, as that they are satisfied with a little. And, because they would have it so, and say, they are sufficiently informed, their Subjects almost always comply with their desires ; and it may be, for friendship, or kindred, or other respects the *Prioreff* may be biased by some particular affection, thinking she goes right, when she erres. Now, as to the admitting them, that may afterward be easilier amended ; but, for the professing them, a very great diligence is requisite ; and that at the time of the *Visitations* the *Superior* be acquainted, whether there be any *Novices*, and how they behave themselves : that, if any be not fit, he may make use of such advertisement at the time of granting the Licence for their *Profession*. For, it is possible, the *Prioreff* may like a *Nun* well, or have some interest of her own, and that the Subjects dare not speak their opinion, yet will tell it the *Superior*. * So that, if it were possible, it were a sure course to defer the Professing them, if nigh, till the *Superior* make his *Visitation* : and likewise, if he think good, to bid them send him their Votes in private, as at an *Election* ; for, it is of such consequence to let nothing continue in the House, which may trouble, and disquiet them all their life, that any diligence whatsoever herein will be well employed.

In admitting *Lay Sisters* much caution is necessary. For, almost all *Prioreffes* love to have many *Lay-Sisters*, and the *Houses* are charged, and with those sometimes that can work little. So that it is very necessary not to comply presently with them, unless there seem considerable need : let enquiry be made of those who are there ; for, except caution be used, much harm may be done. In every *house* care is ever to be taken, that the Number of *Nuns* be not filled up, but that some places lye void. Because one may be presented for a *Nun*, whom it were very advantageous for the *House* to admit, and there is no room. Again to exceed the Number appointed is in no wise to be yielded to, which is to open a Gate to, and imports no less than, the destruction of the *Monastry*. And therefore it is better, that the benefit of one should cease, rather

rather than all receive harm. If the Number be not compleat in any other House, a *Nun* may remove thither, for another so be admitted: and, if she, whom they change, brought a Portion, or Alms, let it be given her, since she goes for altogether: and thus some remedy may be found; but, if this may not be, let the loss prove what it will, but let not a thing be begun so pernicious to all. The *Superior*, when they request his Licence for admitting any, is to be acquainted, what Number there is already, that he may see what is fit; for, there is no reason a matter of such consequence should be trusted only with the *Priorees*.

The *Visitor* must enquire, whether the *Priorees* add to that which they are obliged to; as well in saying the *Office*, as in *Penances*. For, it may happen, that every one may at her pleasure add things so singular, and be so troublesome therein, that the *Nuns* overcharged may lose their health, and be disabled from performing their standing duties. This is not to be understood, when some necessity, for a Day, presents it self; but some may grow so indiscreet, as to make it a Custome, as it is wont to fall out; and the *Nuns* dare not speak, conceiving it little devotion in them; nor is it fit they should speak of it, save to the *Superior*.

Let him observe what is done in the *Quire*, as well Sung, as said; and examine, if they keep the stops; and, what they sing, be in a low voice, suitable to our profession, that may edify others: for, the singing loud hath two inconveniences; the one, that it looks ill, not to keep the true note; the other, that the modesty, and spirit of our way of living are thereby lost. And, if herein great caution be not used, there will be some excess, and the Auditors will lose their devotion: but let their Voices be somewhat mortified, rather than discover, that they seek to please those that hear them; this being now almost general; and, the custome so confirmed, as it seems incurable: so that it is needful much to inculcate it.

It will be to very good purpose, that, touching such important matters as he shall enjoin, the *Superior* should under Obedience before the *Prioree's* command, one [of the Sisters] to write him word, when-ever they are neglected; and that the *Prioree's* should understand, that she can do no less. This in part will serve, as if the *Superior* himself were present, to make them use more care, and circumspection not to exceed in any thing.

It will be expedient, for him effectually to exaggerate, before he begin his *Visitation*, the great mischief that comes by the *Priorees* stomacling those *Sisters*, who tell the *Superiors* their faults, if any occur

to them, though they be not certain thereof: since, as they conceive, they are in conscience obliged hereto: and this, from whence occasion of Mortification is offered her, should please the *Superiores*, since they further her in the better discharging her place, and serving our *Lord*. And, if this be the cause of her disliking the *Nuns*, it is a sure Signe, that she is not fit to govern them; for, at another time they will not dare to speak; as considering, the *Superior* must depart, and they remain in trouble, and thus all will go relaxing. Now, for his admonishing them herein he is not to trust the Sanctity that is in the *Superiores*, how great soever it be; because such is our Nature (and the Enemy, when he hath nothing else to repair himself with, attacks us mainly here) that peradventure he gains in this, what, in other things, he loseth.

Strict se. r. sy in eve. y thing is very requisite in the *Superior*, and to keep the *Superiores* from knowing, who accuseth her; since (as I said) they live yet upon Earth: and, were there no more, it prevents some temptation; how much more, when much harm also may follow therewith.

If the things reported of the *Priores* be not of consequence, they may be told her by the by, without her knowing that the *Nuns* spoke them: for, the more it can be disguised that they have said any thing, the better still. But, when they be things of importance, the remedying them is more to be regarded, than the not displeasing her.

He must enquire, whether any Money comes to the hands of the *Superiores* without the *Key-keepers* knowledge; which imports much (for, without advertising them of it, this may be done unwittingly): nor let her ever possess any, but as the *Constitution* enjoins. In the Houses of *Poverty* this is also necessary. I think I have elsewhere said this, and so other things too; but, it being some time since, I have forgotten it, and not busying my self in reviewing it, I leave it thus.

It is a great trouble for a *Superior* to attend to so many particulars, as are here, but he will finde a greater, when he sees the little good done, where these are not observed. And, as I said, be they never so holy, the *Sisters* must know (the main of all for governing of *Women*, as I intimated at first) they have a Head, that is not to be moved by any earthly thing, but will maintain, and make them observe all the *Order's Laws*, and punish the contrary, looking that special care be taken hereof in every House; and not only will visit every Year, but know, what they do every day; whereby Perfection will rather go on increasing, than impairing: because *Women* for the most part are addicted to *Reputacion*, and *Fear*. What I have said conduces much to their not growing negligent:

ligent: and sometimes, when there is need, let it not be said only, but done; for, by one all will take example. And, if for pity the contrary be done, or for other respects at the beginning, when there are but few faults, he will be forced afterward to do it with more severity, and these pities will prove the greatest Cruelty, and make him render a strict account thereof to God our Lord.

There are some so very simple, as to think it a great fault in them, to speak of the *Prioress's* defects, in matters that should be remedied: and who account it a baseness; an unworthy action: they must be admonished what they are to do: as also that they before-hand advertise the *Superioress* with humility when they see her to fail in a *Constitution*, or in any matters of importance; and, possibly, she is not faulty therein; but it may happen, that those Persons, who affirmed, she did so, because they are disgusted with her, may accuse her. There is great ignorance in discerning what they ought to do in these *Visitations*; and therefore the *Superior* had need by his discretion to go on advertising, and teaching them.

It is very necessary, that he should be acquainted what is done with the *Confessors*, and that not from one, or two, but all the *Nuns*, and the authority given them; for, since he is not the *Vicar*, nor is to be, and this is ordained, for restraining his power, there must be no communication with them, but very sparingly, and the less, the better. In treatments, and Civilities, let great caution be used; though sometimes something cannot be avoided.

It is likewise requisite to advise the *Prioresses* not to be too profuse, and sumptuous, but to take care how they are bound to observe what they spend, since they are but only as House-wives: and are not too lavish, as of their own Stock, but as is fit, with much caution, that there be no excess: since, besides their giving no ill example, they are obliged in conscience hereto, and to preserve the temporals, and retain to themselves nothing in particular more than all the rest, unless it be a *Key* of some little *Trunk* for keeping *Papers*; I mean *Letters*; for, especially if they be any Instructions of the *Superiors*, it is reasonable, they should not be seen.

He is to look, that their *Head-clothes*, and *Apparel* be according to the *Constitution*: and, if at any time he findes any thing. (which God forbid) that seems curious, or not tending to edification, let him cause it to be burnt in his presence. For, by doing so once, they will be afraid, and mend presently, and remember it for those that are to come.

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He is also to observe their manner of speaking, that it be with Simplicity, plainness, and becoming Religion, which useth rather the Stile of *Hermites*, and Persons retired, than to take up expressions of Novelty, and Phrases (for, so I think they call them in the World) there being always new Modes of speaking. Let them more value the being clownish, than curious in these things.

As much as may be possibly, let him prevent *Law-suits*; unless they cannot do otherwise: for, our *Lord* will give them some other way, what they lose this. Let him always incite them to the observing that which is of greater Perfection; and enjoin them, neither to commence, nor prosecute any *Law-suit* without acquainting the *Superior*, and having his special Order.

As likewise concerning those who are to be admitted, let him admonish them, to value more the *Talents* of such Persons, than the *Portions* they bring; and for no respect to admit any, except according to what the *Constitutions* enjoin; especially, if there be any defect in their manners.

It is necessary to carry on what at present is practised by the *Superiors*, whom our *Lord* hath given us, from whom I have taken much of that, which I have said here, seeing their Visitations; especially in this point, that no intimacy be held with one *Sister*, more than with the rest, by staying with her alone, or writing to her, but let the *Superior* shew a common affection to all jointly, as a true *Father*. For, when-ever in any *Monastery* particular amity is taken up, though such as that of S. *Hierom*, and S. *Paula*, it shall not be free from Detraction; as they were not free. Nor will it do harm to that House, but all the rest; for, the Devil, to gain thereby, will soon divulge it; and, for our sins, the World is so fondly addicted to it, that many inconveniences may ensue, as at present is seen. For the same reason the *Superior* is less esteemed, and that general love lost, which, if he be, what he ought, all will ever bear him; as conceiving, that he confines his affection only to one Person; whereas it is very beneficial, to be greatly beloved of all. This should not be understood concerning certain times when necessary occasions present themselves, but concerning matters considerable, and excessive.

Let him remember, when he enters the *Monasteries*, at his coming in to visit the *Clausure* of the House; which, it is fit, he should always do, and strictly look to the whole House, as hath been said already, and that he ever go with his Companion, together with the *Priores*, and some *Nuns*; but, in no wise, though it be Morning, let him stay to eat in the

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Monastery, notwithstanding they should importune him to it ; only let him see how things stand, and instantly dispatch to be gone : for, as for speaking with any, it is better done at the Grace. For, though it may be done with all sincerity, and plainness, it is laying a beginning, because there may in tract of Time come one, to whom, it is not convenient to allow so much liberty : and, if any desire to take more, our *Lord* grant, it be not permitted ; but that these things tending to edifying be ever done, and all the rest, as is now practised. *Amen, Amen.*

Let not the *Visitor* consent to any excess in the Meals they provide him on those days whereon he visits, but only receive what is fit. If he perceive the contrary, let him reprove it sharply. For, it agrees not with the profession of the *Prioresses*, which is, being poor ; nor with that of the *Nuns* ; and serves for nothing ; since they eat only what sufficeth them ; besides, that it doth not edify the *Nuns* herein, as is fit. For the present, should there be some Excess, I conceive it will finde little remedy, by reason the *Superior* we have, minds not, whether they give him little, or much, bad, or good ; nor do I know whether he could understand it, unless he set his mind much upon it. He thinks it a great matter that he should be alone, whilst he makes his Scrutiny, without a Companion ; because, if there be any failing in the *Nuns*, he would not have him hear it ; an admirable course, that the fooleries of the *Nuns*, if any be, may not be known ; for, at present, *God* be praised, it can do little harm ; because the *Superior* looks upon it, and takes notice of it as a *Father*, and, as such, keeps it in mind ; and *God* discovers to him (as being in his stead) the importance of the busines. He that is not so affected, will perhaps think that much, which is nothing ; and, because it greatly concerns not himself, makes little scruple in relating of it, and so without cause the *Monastery* comes to lose its credit. Our *Lord* grant, the *Superiors* may look to it, to do always as he doth.

It is not expedient, he that is *Superior*, should discover, that he affects the *Prioress* much, or is very well pleased with her, at least before the rest ; for, it will make them cowardly, and not dare to mention her defects. But let him carefully remember, it is necessary, they should understand, he will not justify Her, but remedy them, if any thing be to be mended. For, there is no affliction like that of a Soul, that is zealous for *God*, and for her *Order*, when she is grieved to see it go declining, and hopes the *Superior* should remedy things, yet findes, they continue so still ; for, in such case she turns to *God*, resolving thence-forward to be silent, though all sink, seeing, how little she thereby availes. And, because the poor Wretches are heard but once, when call-ed

ed to the Scrutiny, and the *Prioreſſes* have time enough to excuse their failings, and alledge reasons, and extenuate things, yea perhaps to make the poor Creature, that spoke it, suspected of doing it out of Passion, (for, more or leſs, ſhe understands, without their telling her, who it is) and the Superior hath no Witneſs; ſo that things come to be related in ſuch ſort, that, it ſeems, he cannot chufe but believe them; by this means, all continues as it was: for, might one witneſs it, he would know the truth within a few days; whereas the *Prioreſſes* think they ſpeak truth; but this ſelf-love is ſuch a thing, that it is a wonder, if we take the blame upon us, or know our ſelves.

This hath befallen me very often; and that with *Prioreſſes* great Servants of God, whom I credited ſo far, that me-thought the thing was imposſible to be otherwife; and, living ſome days in the *House*, I re-mained aſtoniſhed, to ſee ſo much the contrary of what ſhe told me, and in a matter of Moment; for, ſhe made me think it was their paſſion, though it was almost half the *Covent*; whereas it was ſhe, that underſtood not her ſelf, as afterward ſhe came to know. I conceive, the Devil, not having many occaſions wherein to tempt these Sisters, tempts the *Prioreſſes*, to the end they may frame opinions in certain things of them, and ſee how they brook them. All tends to the praizing our Lord. So that, I am reſolved to believe none, till I have informed my ſelf ſufficiently, that I may make her, who is deceived, understand, that ſhe is ſo: for, unlesſ this course be taken, things will be hardly re-medied.

All this is not in matters of conſequence; but, from these, they may ascend to higher, if they proceed not with cauſion. I am aſtoniſhed to ſee the ſubtilty of the Devil, and how he makes every one imagine, that ſhe speaks the greateſt Truth in the World. "For this reaſon I ſaid, that neither the *Prioreſſe* was entirely to be credited, nor any one parti-cular Nun; but that, when the matter is of Moment, enquiry be made of more, that a remedy may be prudently provided. Our Lord vouch-safe to give us ever diſcreet, and holy Superiors; for, if they be ſuch, his Maieſty will afford them light, to the end they may in every thing pro-ceed aright, and understand us: for, by this means all will be very well governed, and Souls go on increasing in Perfection, to the honour, and glory of God.

F I N I S.